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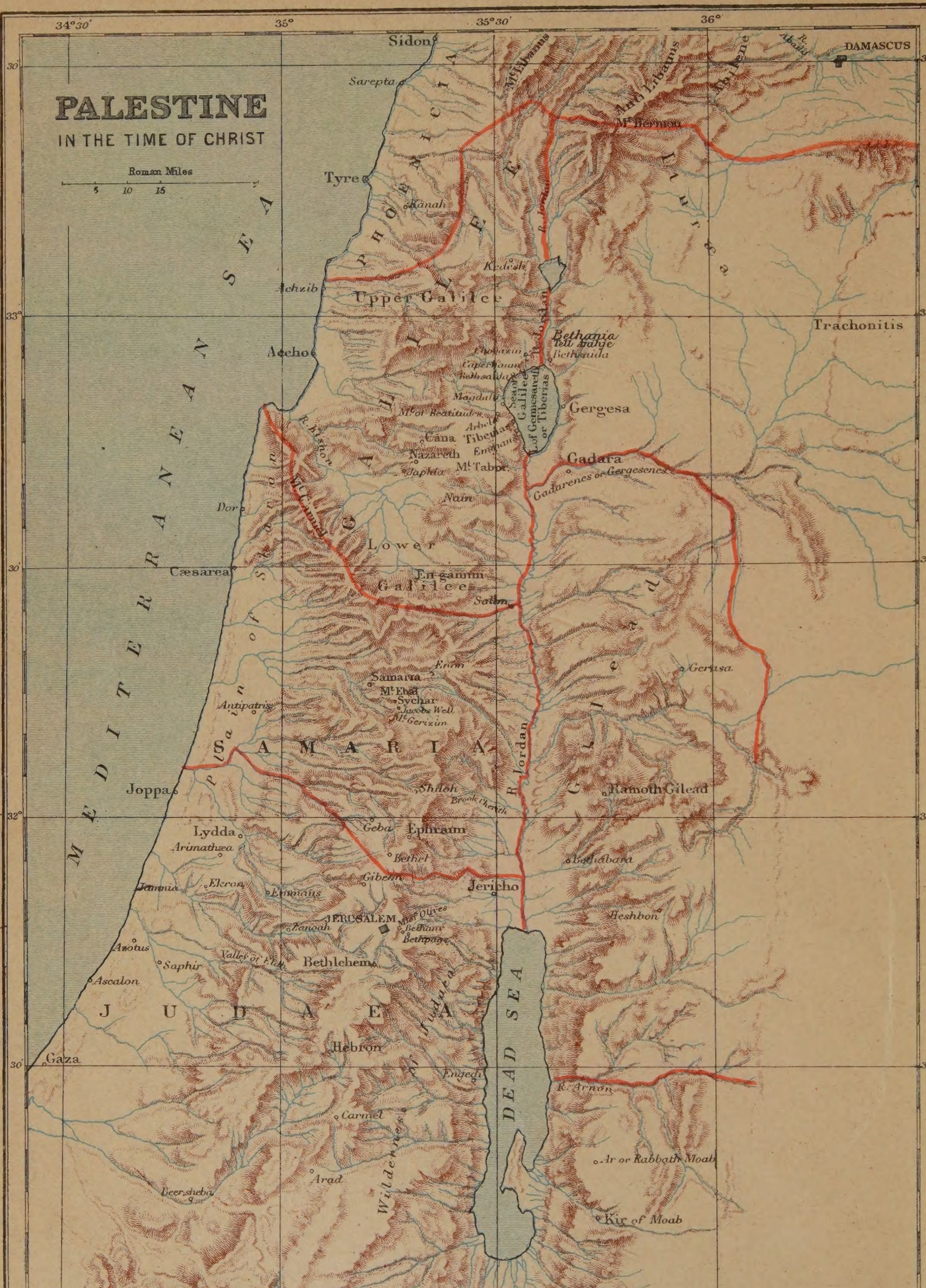
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# NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY

FOR

# ENGLISH READERS.

*BY VARIOUS WRITERS.*

EDITED BY

**CHARLES JOHN ELLICOTT, D.D.**

LORD BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL.

VOL. I.

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"EVERY SCRIBE WHICH IS INSTRUCTED UNTO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE UNTO A MAN THAT IS AN HOUSEHOLDER, WHICH BRINGETH FORTH OUT OF HIS TREASURE THINGS NEW AND OLD."

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California

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

# St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke.

BY

THE VERY REV. E. H. PLUMPTRE, D.D.,

*Dean of Wells.*

---

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

# St. John.

BY

THE VEN. H. W. WATKINS, D.D.,

*Archdeacon of Durham, and Canon of Durham Cathedral.*

School of Theology

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# PREFACE.

The present Commentary may in many respects claim to be considered as new in its design and construction, and as an attempt to supply a need which has been long and seriously felt by meditative readers of God's Holy Word.

We have at present no Commentary of the New Testament which addresses itself especially to that large and increasing class of cultivated English readers who, believing the Holy Scriptures to be what an ancient writer has defined them to be—"the true sayings of the Holy Ghost"—and knowing and feeling them to be living and abiding words, desire to realise them, and to be able intelligently to apply them to their daily wants and to the general context of life around them. This class largely includes those who are unable to read the Holy Scriptures in their original languages, and to whom the many valuable commentaries, based on the original text, which this country and Germany now freely supply, are unavailing and inaccessible. And yet, even if they could read them, they would hardly find in them all they want. They might find lucid explanations of difficulties, well-chosen historical illustrations, judicial discussion of disputed interpretations, candid investigation of real or supposed discrepancies; still there would be something yet wanting which, after all, they would feel was that which they most needed, and for which, even amid all this affluence of exegetical detail, they were to some extent looking in vain. This something, this lacking element, even in commentaries of this higher class, it is the especial object and design of our present Commentary at any rate to attempt to supply; and it may briefly be defined to be this—the setting forth of the inner life of Scripture, and that, too, not without reference to the hopes, fears, needs, aspirations, and distinctive characteristics of the restless age in which we are now living.

No class feels more sensibly the need of this vital element in the interpretation of Holy Scripture than the large and intelligent body of thoughtful men and women to which we are especially addressing ourselves. They feel the storm and stress of intellectual difficulties; they realise, often vividly and acutely, the trials to which the childlike faith of early days is now being increasingly subjected; they see old landmarks disappearing, old truths undergoing modification and change, and, in their deepening anxiety, they turn, with the true instinct of the Christian soul, to that which they inwardly feel changes not—the enduring and abiding Word of God. They turn to it; and it speaks to them, for it is a living Word; but its consolations are often only imperfectly appreciated, its truths far from fully realised, its promises very inadequately recognised to be the true moving principles of a pure, chivalrous, self-denying, and holy life. They need the sympathetic interpreter. They need one to guide them, who has thought as they think, who feels as they feel—one who, from no mere ecclesiastical standpoint, or the supposed vantage-ground of some half-selfish theological adjustment, but simply from the reverent, loving, and prayerful study of the Book of Life, sets forth to them its ever fresh truths, its ever new aspects, its ever pertinent and timely consolations. Such is the commentator and such the commentary that is now more than ever needed by the earnest general reader in these closing years of a progressive and eventful century.

That these high aims have been realised in this present volume is more than any editor, however hopeful, and however confident in the ability of those with whom he is working, could by any means with propriety assert. Yet this may be said—that the attempt has been made with the full recognition, not only of the importance of the work, but of the peculiar aspects it must necessarily assume, and also of the general spiritual characteristics of those for whom it is chiefly designed—thoughtful English readers, who desire to understand the written Word, feel its power, realise its message, estimate its difficulties, and recognise its living adaptation to all the complex relations and problems of modern religious life. If the New Testament is truly what we believe it to be, it must have a message to every age and generation; this message, especially as concerns our own times, is what we are now endeavouring to set forth fully, candidly, and unreservedly, to the Christian reader.

It would be too much to say that this has never been attempted before. Works like those of Bengel may remind us that men to whom the Holy Spirit has vouchsafed a singular interpretative faculty, and, with it, that almost greater gift of bringing its results home alike to the heart and to the perceptions of the reader—works such as these, as marvellous in the fruitful brevity of their comments as profound in their spiritual power, may well remind us that He who inspired the Word has never left Himself without clear and faithful interpreters of it. This we fully believe and recognise; still we may also express our belief that it is more particularly in our own times that the need for such an attempt as the present has distinctly emerged, and so that anything novel which it may involve is due to the circumstances of the case, and to the plain fact that, as the needs are new, so that which attempts to meet the needs must have some elements which are new also. Thus far our work may be considered to occupy new ground, and in many respects to be considered a new Commentary: new, because it includes new elements; new, because it meets new needs.

But what are these new needs? What is it that has really called into existence such attempts as this present Commentary may in some degree represent? The answer is not far to seek. Modern criticism has made it in many minds doubtful whether Scripture is what it declares itself to be—living and enduring, not only a record of salvation, but a bearer of it to the soul; not only, as the early writers commonly regarded it, a source of illumination to the mind, but a life-influencing and life-modifying power, as fresh and as potent now as when its words were first heard in the Christian Church. Modern criticism has declared all such views to be dreams and enthusiasms, perhaps harmless, but certainly illusory; enthusiasms which may be regarded by the calm student of history as either the not unnatural results of traditional reverence, or the sequences of that great movement in the religious life of Western Europe that transferred infallibility from a Church to a Book, and invested with supernatural attributes the documents of an early Christianity which, it is asserted, itself never so regarded them. And these chilling doubts have crept into the souls of thousands. The early love and reverence for the blessed Book, and especially for the New Testament, has become silently transmuted into a calm and cold acceptance of it as the record of a wondrous era in this poor world's changing history; as a group of documents setting forth a morality purer than the mind of man had ever realised; as the sad, strange story of a blessed life, half real, half ideal, to which eighteen centuries have tendered their irrepressible homage; as this, and perhaps as all this, and yet as nothing beyond it—history, and nothing more. Many and many a weary soul, and those not the least noble among us, are at this very hour feeling all this, and feeling it too with the sad inward consciousness that the soul remains unsatisfied; that the dew of early belief has dried up, and that nothing has ever supplied its place; and that if only it were possible that that dew could rise again all yet might be well: that the lost might yet be found, and a hope in something higher than the mere development of our humanity might again take its leading place among the lights and forces of the soul. Many a one would give half a life if only it could be made certain that the New Testament might be completely accepted as true, and that its words once more might be heard as the voice of God speaking through the lips and with the utterance of mortal man.

These are some of the needs of the present time, and it is to meet them, and to show that God's word is really what it claims to be; that it is truth—vivid, fresh, and enduring truth; that it is light, and not light only—but life, life speaking to life—to show this, and to meet these needs is one of the chief purposes of our present Commentary. It is under these aspects that it may lay claim to the title of a new Commentary—new, as thus meeting new needs; new, as seeking to supply guidance amid newly developing difficulties and perplexities.

But this—as, indeed, we have already implied—is very far from being our only purpose. There are, thank God, thousands and tens of thousands to whom this Book of Life is what it ever was, and who perhaps feel themselves more potently drawn to it than ever. Numbers of quiet and godly souls there now are, weary with the controversies of the times, who are turning now, as men turned in stirring days gone by, to the Holy Scriptures, and are making them their ultimate Book of appeal—ultimate whether in regard of the homely needs of daily Christian life, or of those blessed hopes and promises that bring nearer the unfolding future. And these too are seeking for a Commentary that may really meet and sympathise with their aspirations—a Commentary that may help them to realise the blessed story, to see things as with modern, and yet as with reverential and believing eyes, and to hear with the ears of to-day the message, the great life-giving message, that is now just as pertinent and applicable to all the varying circumstances of modern life as it was when to listening disciples and thronging multitudes it was declared that God's kingdom was nigh at hand. Everything that thus brings back the past and places it, as it were, among the realities of the present, is what the modern religious mind is now consciously or unconsciously seeking. Its chief care is to make its own what it knows was designed to be its own; and it welcomes readily and gladly any or every form of interpretation that seems to have this purpose or object in view.

It is for these—for this large and increasing class of really earnest readers of God's Holy Word—that this Commentary has been more especially composed. Though, as has been already said, the deep needs of those who have not yet realised the Book to be what it is have ever been present to our minds; and though every effort has been made indirectly to set forth that greatest of all evidential arguments, the deep life of the written Word, to each truth-seeking and unbiassed reader; yet our chief thought has been for those who desire more fully to realise that which, by the mercy of God, they have never been tempted to doubt. How many there are who are now earnestly seeking for that which we are here endeavouring to present to them! The student of Holy Scripture, the Christian father of the family where God's Word is loved and reverenced, the upgrowing children, the teacher in the Sunday-school or the instructor of the Bible-class, and, last and chief of all, that large class of English readers who feel themselves more and more drawn to God's Word by the very restlessness of the times in which they are living. All these, and such as these, are now earnestly craving to have Scripture brought home to their hearts, and that too not merely by interpretation of difficulties, but by meditative comments—comments of our time and age, comments that help to make the Book not only better understood, not only more reverenced, but more and more loved, more and more felt to be life to the inner soul as well as light to the appreciative mind.

These, then, are the two broad classes of readers—those who doubt the full authority of Scripture, but who would rejoice to have those doubts dissipated, and that much larger class that (by God's blessing) doubt not, but desire more fully to realise and to understand: these are the two classes who have been ever present to the thoughts of the writers of this Commentary, and for whom especially they have undertaken this work. May the favour and grace of God the Holy Ghost rest upon it, and bless it both to the writers and to the readers.

Thus far our thoughts have been directed to our readers. Let a few words be added in reference to the writers who are associated together in this responsible work. They are men of different minds and of different modes of individual thought, but all have one common purpose—all are animated by one common feeling of love and reverence for God's Holy Word, all have for it that sympathy which shows itself most clearly and most truly when it tries to impart that feeling to others, and to share with them a common love. Free and candid thoughts will be found in these pages; difficulties will not be passed over; if they cannot, as yet, be explained, the avowal will be made with all Christian simplicity, and the direction in which the solution appears to lie, pointed out by way of suggestion and reasonable inference —suggestion and inference, but nothing more. No attempt will be made merely to rehabilitate what may have the sanction of honoured names or ancient authority; still less merely to reproduce some current and conventional explanation, which is not only felt to be what it is by every intelligent reader, but is even distinctly harmful and repellent to the reverential searcher. The truth is very dear to the writers of this Commentary, and their reverence for it is too great to allow them ever to set forth as truth any explanations in which they themselves have not the fullest and completest confidence. Yet let no one for a moment suppose that in these pages he will find traces of unfixed opinions or of fluctuating and half-persuaded sentiments as to the real nature of God's Holy Word. No: each one of our little company knows in Whom and in What he has trusted—knows and believes that truth, heavenly truth, is present in every verse, even though he may not be able to see it in its clearness, or set it forth in its fulness; and knows it, too, by that best and truest of all teachings—the silent witness of Scripture to the inward soul, deepened by life's experiences—that *testimonium animæ,* which bears the conviction no arguments can supply, no merely outward reasoning can do more than passingly substantiate. Candour, and candid seeking after truth, the reader will find; and with it that sympathy of spirit in difficulties which alone makes the writer and the reader truly to be at one. This, we humbly believe, each one who may read these pages will find legibly traced on them; but on the one great truth that Holy Scripture alike is God's Word and contains God's Word, there will be found no hesitancy or fluctuation. Let this be called an assumption at the very outset which perfect impartiality ought never to make—let it be called prejudice, inherited bias, or bear whatever other name our own unstable age may think fit to apply to it; such, at any rate, is the conviction of the writers of this Commentary, and such the general attitude of mind under which they have addressed themselves to their responsible work.

And now, lastly, a few comments on the details of this work, as regards both the matter and manner of interpretation.

In the first place, the Authorised version is that on which the Commentary is formed; and this for obvious reasons. This is a work for general readers, to whom the Authorised version will for years to come be the form in which God's Word is presented to them. As such it stands as our text, and as that which the notes are designed to illustrate. But while it rightly occupies that place, care has been taken never to fail to indicate whensoever and wheresoever there is sound reason for believing that the words do not reflect the true text or the true meaning of the original. Mere minutiæ of textual criticism are not enumerated; mere shades of interpretation which leave the real meaning substantially the same are not specified. The reader, however, may in all cases feel confident that nothing in this department of the work is passed over which it is proper for the faithful student of Holy Scripture to have presented to his consideration. The notes will remind him that there is real need for a revision of our Authorised version, perhaps more even in its textual than in its grammatical aspects; but at the same time he will not fail to observe how comparatively few the passages are in which the true meaning of the original is entirely obscured. There are many in which its full meaning is very inadequately expressed; but, by the overruling mercy and providence of God, distinctly erroneous forms of words appear very rarely either in the text or in the translation.

The Notes, as already has been to some extent implied, are designed for earnest searchers and earnest readers who have either no knowledge of the original language, or only such a knowledge as may be at best but a precarious guide. Hence the references in the Notes are in all cases to works accessible by means of translation to English readers. Such references are not numerous, but, wherever they appear, they will be found to direct the reader to illustrative matter, which will much help his true appreciation of the passage under consideration. The effect, not only on the general power of rightly apprehending the meaning of a passage, but on the memory, and, if we may so speak, on the spiritual interest in the inspired words under consideration, will be found greatly enhanced by an attention to a well-chosen reference, and by an honest perusal of the source of illustration, or of further information to which the reader may be directed. References, whether to Scripture or to works that illustrate it, are of the greatest and most real importance. If thoughtfully and conscientiously made, and as thoughtfully and conscientiously referred to by the reader, they are of lasting profit. But the choice must be well considered and well tested, and the number of references carefully limited. Full confidence must exist in this matter between the commentator and his reader; and such confidence we trust and believe will be found to arise between the writers and readers of this Commentary.

But the broad purpose of the Notes—not only to explain and to illustrate, but to bring home to the heart of the reader the sacred text to which the Notes are appended—has never been lost sight of or merged in mere exegetical detail. On the one hand all real or seeming difficulties have been candidly set forth, and the inferences which may be thought to flow from them discussed and analysed. Nothing has been kept back from the reader. The truth, so far as a knowledge of it has been vouchsafed to the interpreter, has been stated fully and unreservedly; and where difficulty yet remains, no attempt has been made to hide it by any of the plausibilities of a mere conventional or traditional exegesis. If that which lies before us is God's word, revealed to man through the instrumentality of man, then difficulties there must be; yet difficulties of such a nature as, if rightly and reverently discussed, will, in the sequel, only still more clearly and convincingly display the blessed fulness of the manifold and multiform wisdom of God. On the other hand, where the meaning is plain, and the inferences from it presumably certain, there, with equal freedom and unreserve, these inferences have been drawn, and the results—results often in contrast with the current superficial estimates of a mere popular theology—laid seriously before the reader. Our work is for the thoughtful and earnest, for those who seek truth and love truth, for those who desire to be guided by God's Word, and to realise its message in days of doubt and transition; and to withhold from such what would seem to be the full counsel of God, would be to miss the first great duty of a conscientious interpreter. Such, in broad and general terms, is the prevailing aspect of the notes and exegesis of this Commentary.

Two useful supplements to these Notes will be found in the case of the sacred books here commented upon. In the first place, an Introduction is prefixed to each portion of Scripture; in which everything that is judged to be likely to illustrate the scope, circumstances, or general details of the inspired writing, is placed succinctly—but yet, it is hoped, with no want of completeness—before the general reader. In the second place, wherever it may have seemed necessary, an Excursus has been appended to the Notes, for the benefit of the student who might desire a fuller and more technical treatment of the subject than would be consistent with the general scope of the Commentary. By this means the many points which require a separate consideration will be found so far critically, as well as fully, discussed, as to leave no reader, to whatever class he may belong, uninformed in regard of the last and best results, in each particular, of modern interpretation.

To the whole work an Introduction is prefixed, from which it is hoped that both the general and the critical reader will derive trustworthy information both as to the literary history of the sacred documents, and the deeply interesting story of the noble English version which is the text of this Commentary. Such information will be found useful to the reader at every step of his progress. He will practically see and realise that the outward elements of God's inspired Word have had a great and even mysterious history, and that if we may humbly see His blessed inspiration in the written words, no less clearly may we trace His providence in the outward manner in which those words have come down to us. No really faithful student of God's Holy Word will do well to pass over this portion of the work. No reader, however moderately versed in knowledge of this kind, will fail to derive from these pages information which he will readily comprehend, and at once find to interest him still more deeply in the sacred words which form the subject of the providential history.

One brief and closing paragraph may allude to the work of the Editor, and, if I may here speak in the first person, the aspects under which I have regarded the responsible office, and the manner in which I have endeavoured to perform the duties allotted to me. My care has simply been to help each writer, wheresoever it might seem necessary, to set forth his own views with clearness and cogency. Without perfect independence on the part of the writers—and such writers, let me add, as we have had the good fortune to secure for this Commentary—no good results could be looked for, no realisation of our great and common objects could ever be attained. Where it has seemed necessary, I have used an Editor's freedom in suggesting partial reconsideration; but I have deemed it right to leave the writer wholly free to maintain that line of interpretation which, after such reconsideration, he still felt it his duty to take. All I have asked is that he should make it plain that it was a view for which he was individually responsible. Where I have simply differed from the writer in points on which interpreters of different minds have differed and will differ to the end, there I have in no way sought to indicate my own opinion, feeling sure that the writer had considered this opinion (for I lay claim to no originality) among those which had passed in review before him. Each writer, in a word, is responsible for his own commentary and his own interpretations. It has been my care only to see, by close and careful reading, that the writer did not fail, from any oversight, to set forth these interpretations fully and clearly. To express here any opinion on what is now submitted to the reader would be indecorous and unusual; yet this I must ask leave to say—that I can wish no better wish to any reader, than that he may derive the same interest and advantage that I have derived from the perusal of this volume of our Commentary.

I return now to the company and brotherhood of those with whom I am associated, and with them pray to our merciful God and Father that this our work may be blessed by His divine favour, and that His heavenly truth may be brought more and more home to the hearts of the readers of His Holy Word. We have striven, at a critical time in the history of religious opinion, to show forth the fulness of that Word, its light and its life; and we now commend these results of our labours to all who love Him of whom the Scriptures speak from the beginning to the end—Jesus Christ, our Lord, our Saviour, our King, and our God; to Whom, with the Father and the eternal Spirit, be all honour and glory, for the ages of eternity.

C. J. GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL.

# INTRODUCTION.

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## I.—THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

I. The language in which we commonly speak of the volume which all Christians accept as being, in some sense, their rule of faith and life, presents many terms more or less technical in character, each of which has a distinct history of its own, not without interest. The whole volume for us is the BIBLE, or more fully, the HOLY BIBLE, containing the OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS. Sometimes we use the SCRIPTURE, or the SCRIPTURES, or the HOLY SCRIPTURES, as a synonym for the Bible. With these we sometimes find, bound up in the same volume, "the books called APOCRYPHA," which are distinguished in the Sixth of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England from the "CANONICAL BOOKS of the Old and New Testament." It is desirable that the student of the New Testament should know, at least in outline, something as to the meaning and history of each of these terms.

II. Of all the words so used, SCRIPTURE, or THE SCRIPTURES, is that which stands highest, as far as the claims of antiquity and authority affect our estimate. It had come to be used by the Jews before our Lord's time as contrasting—as the Moslem now contrasts, in reference to the Koran—those who had a written rule, or book, as the rule of faith and life, with those who had not. The books that had been written in "sundry times and divers manners" (see Note to Heb. i. 1, for the true meaning of the words), and which, after various processes of sifting, editing, and revising, were then received as authoritative, were known as "*the* Writings," "*the* Scriptures," as in Matt. xxi. 42, Luke xxiv. 27, John viii. 39, sometimes with the addition of the term "holy," or "sacred" (2 Tim. iii. 5.) It was because they studied this literature (*grammata*), that the interpreters of the Law were known as "scribes" (*grammateis*). When these books were quoted, it was enough to say, "It is written" (*e.g.*, Matt. iv. 4, 6; xxi. 13; xxvi. 24), or, with more emphasis, "*the* Scripture saith" (*e.g.*, Rom. iv. 7; ix. 17), or to cite this or that "Scripture" (Mark xii. 10).

It may be noted, however, that the later terminology of the Jews in their classification of the Sacred Books differed from this. They applied the term "Writings" (*Kethubim*), or "Holy Writings" (from which we get the Greek *Hagiographa*, with the same meaning) to one portion only of the collection, and that, in some sense, the one which they reckoned as the lowest. First came the LAW, including the Five Books of Moses, whence the term *Pentateuch* (=the five-volumed Writing); (2) the earlier Prophets, including under that head Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings; and (3) the later Prophets, including (*a*) the three Greater Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and (*b*) the twelve Minor Prophets, as we have them; (4) the *Kethubim*, or "Writings," including the following groups of books:—(*a*) Psalms, Proverbs, Job; (*b*) the five *Megilloth*, or Rolls, the Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther; (*c*) Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, 1 and 2 Chronicles. So far as the later Jews wanted one word for the whole of what we call the Old Testament, they used the term *Mikra* (="what is read or recited"), a word which has the interest of being connected with the Koran, or sacred book, of Islam.

III. The Greek word for BIBLE (*Biblion*) occurs in our version as "book," in 2 Tim. iv. 13, Rev. x. 3, v. 1, but not apparently with any specially distinctive sense. It is just possible that in the first of these passages St. Paul may refer to what he elsewhere calls the Scriptures. (See Note on 2 Tim. iv. 13.) This sense, however, did not begin to attach to the word by itself till the twelfth or thirteenth century. Greek writers indeed, talked, as was natural, of the sacred or holy "books" on which their faith rested; and, as in the Council of Laodicea, drew up catalogues of such books, or spoke of the whole universe as a book, or "bible," in which men might read the wisdom and the love of the Creator. It was natural, as the word came to be used, like other Greek terms, in the Western churches, that transcribers, or binders, of the "sacred books" should label them as *Biblia Sacra*. As the centuries passed on, however, men forgot the origin of the word, and took *Biblia*, not for a neuter plural, as it really was, but for a feminine singular; and so we get the origin of the "Holy Bible," betraying itself in most European languages, as, *e.g.*, in *La Bible, La Bibbia, die Bibel*, by the feminine form of the noun. We are able to fix, within comparatively narrow limits, the date of the introduction of the word so used into our English language. It was unknown to our Saxon fathers. They used *ge-writ*, the "Writing," or following Jerome's felicitous phrase, *Bibliothekè*, the "library" or collection of books. "Bible" came into use through the Norman conquest and the prevalence of French. Chaucer uses it in his earlier poems (*House of Fame*, Book iii., l. 244) as applicable to any book. In the Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*, l. 437, his latest work, it stands as "*the* Bible," with its new distinctive honours. Wycliffe's translation of what was headed as the Holy Bible, and the frequent use of the term in the Preface to this translation, probably gained for it a wide acceptance, and all idea of its plural meaning having dropped out of sight, the definite article acquired a new significance, and it was received, as ninety-nine readers out of a hundred receive it now, as *the* Bible, *the* Book above all other books.

IV. The history of the terms the OLD and the NEW TESTAMENT leads us into a region of yet higher interest. They have their starting point in the memorable distinction drawn between the Covenant that had been made with Israel through Moses, and the New Covenant, with its better promises, which was proclaimed for the future, in Jer. xxxi. 31. That promise received a fresh significance, and was stamped for ever on the minds of the followers of Christ, by the words which were spoken on the night of the Last Supper, when He told the Apostles that it was ratified by His own blood. (See Note on Matt. xxvi. 28, where *Covenant*, and not "Testament," is the right rendering.) The stress laid on the distinction between the two Covenants in the Epistle to the Hebrews (chaps. vii.—x.) was, as it were, the natural development of that thought; and the repetition of the words of institution, as we find them in 1 Cor. xi. 25, at every celebration of the Supper of the Lord, secured for it a universal acceptance in all the churches. For a time, the essential outlines of the New Covenant—the terms, as it were, of the New Contract—were conveyed chiefly or exclusively by the oral teaching of the Apostles and their immediate followers. But soon the New Covenant, like the Old, gathered round it a literature of its own. Without anticipating what will have to be said hereafter as to the history of individual books, it lies on the surface that within sixty or seventy years after the Death and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus, there were written records of His words and deeds, Epistles purporting to be written by His Apostles and disciples, revelations of the future of His kingdom. In course of time, but probably not till the fourth century, the books so received came naturally enough to be known as the Books of the New Covenant (*diathekè*), as distinguished from those of the Old; and so in the Council of Laodicea, in A.D. 320, we have lists of the books which were recognised as belonging to each (*Can.* 59). The Greek word for Covenant was never naturalised, however, in the Latin of the Western and African churches, and the writers of those churches were for a time undecided as to what equivalent they should use for it, and wavered between *fœdus*, a "covenant"; *instrumentum*, a "deed"; and *testamentum*, a "will." The earlier Latin writers, such as Tertullian (*adv. Marcion*, vi. 1), use both the two latter words, but state that the last was the more generally accepted term. As such, it passed first into the early Latin versions of the Scriptures, and then into St. Jerome's Vulgate, and so became familiar through the whole of Latin Christendom. If we confine its meaning to its strict legal sense of "will," it must be admitted to be a less accurate rendering than *fœdus* of the general sense of the Greek *diathekè* (Heb. ix. 16 is, of course, an exception; see Note there), and the latter word has accordingly been adopted by some of the more scholarly Protestant theologians, such as Beza, as part of their terminology. So in the writings of the French Reformed Church, the New Testament appears as *La Nouvelle Alliance.* Luther, with a certain characteristic love for time-honoured words, used *Testament* throughout, and though some recent German writers have used *Bund*, it does not seem likely to gain general acceptance. In the history of the English versions we find Wycliffe, as was natural in a translation from the Vulgate, using "Testament" uniformly. Tyndale, in spite of his usual tendency to change the familiar terms of Latin theology, was probably in part influenced by Luther's example, and retained "Testament" throughout. He was followed in the other English translations, till we come to that known as the Geneva version, where it is replaced by "Covenant" in most passages, still retaining, so to speak, its place of honour in Matt. xxvi. 28, Luke xxii. 20, and Heb. ix. 16, and it has thus secured a position from which it will not be easy to dislodge it. In strict accuracy, we ought to speak, as the title-page of our Bible does, of the Books of the New Testament, but the natural tendency of popular speech to economy of utterance leads men to speak of the "New Testament" as including the books.

V. In the Sixth of the Thirty-nine Articles of the English Church, we find the phrase Canonical Scriptures, and that term also has a noteworthy history of its own. We start from the Greek word *kanôn*, connected with "canna," "cane," "canalis," "channel," "canal," "cannon"—all the words implying the idea of straightness—and find its primary meaning to be that of a "reed," or rather (for that belongs to the earlier form, *kanè*), of a *rod;* then of a rod used as a carpenter's rule; thence, by a natural use of metaphors, it was employed, chiefly by Alexandrian critics and grammarians, for a "rule" in ethics, or rhetoric, or grammar. So the great writers of Greece were referred to as being the *Canon* or standard of accuracy. In the LXX. version of the Old Testament, the word is found only once, in Mic. vii. 10. The passage is very obscure, but it is apparently used in the sense of a column or bar of some sort, as it is also in Judith xiii. 8. The figurative sense had become dominant in the time of the New Testament, and so we find St. Paul using it in Gal. vi. 16, Phil. iii. 16, for a "rule" of faith and life, and in 2 Cor. x. 13, 16, for one which marked out a man's appointed line of work. So Councils made *Canons*, or Rules, for the churches. So those who were bound by the rules of cathedrals and collegiate churches were called *Canonici*, or Canons. So the fixed invariable part of the Roman liturgy was known as the *Canon* of the Mass.

At even an earlier period than that to which these later illustrations refer, the word had come into use as belonging to the language of theology. Clement of Alexandria speaks of the *Canon* of the Church being found in the agreement of the Law and the Prophets with the traditional teaching of the New Covenant (*Strom.* vi., p. 676). Chrysostom and other commentators find the *Canon*, or Rule, of Faith in Scripture. Tertullian, obviously Latinising the same word, speaks of the doctrine which the Church had received from the Apostles or embodied in a creed, as the *regula fidei.* Alexandria appears in this, as in other instances, to have been the main source of ecclesiastical terminology. In Origen we find the next application of the word, and he speaks (in books of which we have only the Latin version) of the *Scripturæ Canonicæ*, the *libri regulares*, the *libri canonizati*—of books that are "in the *Canon.*" Here there is a slight change of meaning. The books are not only the rule of the Church's faith; they are themselves in conformity with a standard. They find their place in a list which is accepted by the Church as the rule of what is or is not Scripture. So Athanasius speaks of books that are in this sense "canonised," and the Council of Laodicea (*Can.* 39) of those that are not so. Amphilochius (*circ.* A.D. 380) takes up the language of the Latin translator of Origen, and uses it for the actual *Catalogue* of Books. With Jerome the term is in frequent use in this sense, and from his writings it passed into the common language of Latin Christendom, and so into that of modern Europe, and men spoke of the *Canonical Scriptures* as those which were in the *Canon.*

VI. The history of the word has to be followed by the history of the origin and growth of the thing. Without anticipating what will find a more fitting place in the *Introduction* to each several book, viz., the traces which each has left of itself in early ecclesiastical writings, and the evidence which we have in those traces of its genuineness, it lies on the surface that the Christian Society had a literature of some kind at a very early period. There were the "Words of the Lord Jesus," quoted by St. Paul as known (Acts xx. 35), and quoted as

Scripture (1 Tim. v. 18). There were Epistles that were cited in the same way (2 Pet. iii. 16). There were "many" records of the life and teaching of Christ (Luke i. 1). The "memoirs" of the Apostles were read publicly in Christian assemblies, and these were known as Gospels (Justin, *Apol.* c. 66). Besides these books, which are now in the Canon, we find a Gospel of the Hebrews, and of St. Peter, a Revelation bearing the name of the same Apostle, an Epistle to the Laodiceans, and so on. It was obvious that men would want some standard by which to discern the genuine from the spurious; and as lists of the Old Testament had been drawn up at an early period of the Church, by Melito of Sardis (A.D. 180) and others, so, as we have seen, the Church of Alexandria, the centre of the criticism of early Christendom, supplied the thing, as it had supplied the word. The process by which such a list was drawn up must be left, in part, to imagination, but it is not difficult to picture to ourselves, with little risk of error, what it must almost necessarily have been. A man of culture and great industry, imbued with the critical habits of his time, such, *e.g.*, as was Origen, finds a multitude of books before him professing to have come down from the time of the Apostles. He takes them one by one, and examines the claims of each. Has it been read in church at all, and if so, where, and in how many churches? Has it been quoted by earlier writers? Has it been one of a group assigned to the same writer, with the same characteristics of style as the other books so assigned? Whence has it come? Who can report its history? It is obvious that the answer to these questions was to be found in a process of essentially personal inquiry, of the exercise of private judgment, of the critical reason working upon history. And so, to take the earliest instance of such a list which we can connect with a name, we find Origen giving one which includes the four Gospels by name, the Epistles of St. Paul (the names of the Epistles, however, are not given, nor even the total number of them), the two Epistles of St. Peter, the second being noted as open to question, the Revelation, and one "acknowledged" Epistle by St. John. Elsewhere he mentions the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the traditions which assigned it to St. Paul, St. Luke, and Clement of Rome respectively. Another, without a name, but commonly known as the Muratorian Canon, from that of the scholar who first found it among the MSS. of the Ambrosian Library at Milan, is assigned, on internal grounds, to a period about A.D. 170. It is imperfect both in the beginning and the end, and though in Latin, bears every mark of having been translated from the Greek. It had obviously mentioned the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark, for it begins "in the third place, Luke the physician wrote a Gospel." It then names St. John, the Acts, the Epistles of St. Paul, enumerating nine Epistles to seven churches; the three Epistles now known as Pastoral, and that to Philemon. It rejects two, to the Laodiceans and Alexandrians, as spurious; recognises a Revelation of St. Peter, two Epistles and the Revelation of St. John; and strangely enough, for a list of books of the New Testament, includes the Wisdom of Solomon,* and the Pastor, or Shepherd of Hermas. The whole fragment is of extreme interest, as representing a transition stage in the formation of the Canon, exhibiting at once the spirit of critical investigation which was at work, and the uncertainty which more or less attended the process of inquiry. A nearly contemporaneous version of the New Testament writings in the Syriac, known as the *Peschito* (= the "simple" or "true" version), exhibits nearly the same results. It includes fourteen Epistles by St. Paul, that to the Hebrews being assigned to his authorship, but omits 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, and the Apocalypse. A like catalogue is given in the fourth century (*circ.* A.D. 330), by Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine, and Amphilochius of Asia Minor (*circ.* A.D. 380). The former divides the books into two classes, the one those which are generally recognised, and the other those that were still open to question (*Antilegomena*); and the latter list includes 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, and the Apocalypse. This may be taken, though not exhaustive, as a sufficient account of the evidence supplied by individual writers, and as they include representatives of Alexandria, Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, and Rome, it may fairly be considered as embodying the general consent of the Christian Church in the fourth century.

These individual testimonies were confirmed about the same period by the authority of two local Councils of the Church. That held at Laodicea in A.D. 363 (?) gives a list of the "Books of the Old Testament" *that ought to be read*, agreeing with the Hebrew Canon, except that it inserts Baruch and the Epistle of Jeremiah, and in its catalogue of the "Books of the New Testament," gives a complete list of those now received, without noting, as Eusebius notes, any difference between them, with the one exception that it makes no mention of the Apocalypse, and that it assigns the Epistle to the Hebrews to St. Paul. That known as the third Council of Carthage (A.D. 397), enumerates among the "Canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament," Tobias (=Tobit), Judith, and the two books of Maccabees, and in its list of those of the New, includes, without any exception, all the books that are now recognised, and does so on the ground that this was what had been received from "the Fathers."

The history of this growth of the Canon of the New Testament is in many ways instructive. It has been often thrown in the teeth of those who urge the right of private judgment as against the authority of the Church of Rome, or of the Church in her Councils generally, that we have no ground for our acceptance of the Scriptures themselves, and especially for that of the Scriptures of the New Testament, but that authority. The facts that have been stated exhibit a process which leads naturally and necessarily to the very opposite conclusion. What we have traced is the exercise, at every stage, of private judgment, of criticism working upon history; and it is not till this has done its work that Councils step in to recognise and accept the results that have been thus obtained. And when this is done, be it observed, it is not by any Œcumenical or General Council, nor by the Church which claims to have been founded by St. Peter, nor by the Bishop who claims to be his successor, but by two Synods, in comparatively remote provinces, who confine themselves to testifying what they actually found. Other men had laboured, and they entered into their labours. The authority of the Church, so far as it was asserted, rested on the previous exercise of free inquiry and private judgment. How far later inquiry may have modified the results of the earlier, throwing doubt on what was then accepted as certain, or establishing the genuineness of what was then looked upon as doubtful, compensating for its remoteness by its wider range and manifold materials, by its skill in following up hints and tracing coincidences designed or undesigned—this is a question which in its bearing on individual books of the New Testament will be best discussed in the *Introduction* to each of those Books.

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* The facts connected with this remarkable book are briefly —(1) That it is not named by any pre-Christian writer; (2) that it is not quoted by any writer before Clement of Rome; (3) that it presents innumerable points of resemblance in phraseology and style to the Epistle to the Hebrews. These facts have led the present writer to the conviction that they are both by the same author, the one written before, and the other after, his conversion to the faith in Christ. (See two papers "On the Writings of Apollos," in the *Expositor*, Vol. I.)

VII. Side by side with the Books as belonging to the Old or New Testament thus recognised as Canonical, there were those which had been weighed in the balance and found wanting. These were known either as being simply "uncanonised" or "uncanonical," as not being in the list which formed the standard of acceptance. Such as continued, from their having formed part of the generally accepted Greek version of the Old, to be read in churches or quoted by devout scholars, were described by a term which had already become conspicuous as applied to the Wisdom of the Son of Sirach, the book Ecclesiasticus, and were known as "ecclesiastical," and these included all, or nearly all, the books which we commonly know as the APOCRYPHA. Later writers, especially among the more liberal or critical Roman Catholic writers since the Council of Trent, have invented and applied the term *Deutero-canonical* to those books, as recognising that they do not stand on the same level as those included in the older Canons of Laodicea and Carthage. The Council itself (*Sess.* 4), however, had the courage of its convictions, and setting aside the authority of earlier councils, and of the great Father to whom it owed its Vulgate, drew no such distinction. It added to the Canon of Scripture, not, indeed, all the books that we know as the Apocrypha, but the greater part of them: Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, the additions to Esther and Daniel, and the two books of Maccabees. It declared that all these books were to be received with the same reverence as the other sacred writings. It placed the traditions of the Church on the same level with the sacred books thus defined. It pronounced its anathema on all who did not accept its Canon of Scripture, or despised its traditions. It deliberately proclaimed to all men that this was the foundation of its faith.

The history of the word APOCRYPHA exhibits a curious instance of a change from honour to dishonour. Primarily it simply meant "hidden" or "secret." In this sense we find it in Luke viii. 17; Col. ii. 3; Ecclus. xxiii. 19. It was used accordingly by teachers who claimed a higher esoteric wisdom which they embodied in secret, *i.e.*, in this sense, apocryphal, writings. Traces of such a boast, even among Jews and Christians, are found in 2 Esdr. (obviously a post-Christian book), where the scribe is instructed to reserve seventy books for "such only as be wise among the people" (2 Esdr. xiv. 46), in distinction from the twenty-four (this, and not two hundred and four, is probably the right reading) of the Hebrew Canon. The books thus circulated, with their mysterious pretensions, imposing on the credulity of their readers, were "hidden" in another sense. No man knew their history or their authorship. They were not read in the synagogues of the Jews, or, for the most part, in the churches of Christians. They deserved to be hid, and not read. And so the word sank rapidly in its connotation, and became a term of reproach. Already, in the time of Tertullian (*de Animâ*, c. 12) and Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* i. 19, 69), it is used in the sense which has ever since attached to it, of spurious and unauthentic. Its present popular application dates from the time of St. Jerome. In Greek churches and Latin churches that used a version based upon that of the LXX., the position occupied by many of the books now included under that word, secured for them the same respect as the other books; they were quoted as "Scripture," as "inspired," as "prophecy." Where, on the contrary, men were brought into contact with Judaism, and so with the Hebrew Canon, they were led to draw the distinction which has since obtained. So Melito of Sardis (A.D. 180), in his Canon of the Old Testament, follows that of the Jews, and Cyril of Jerusalem (A.D. 315—386) adds only Baruch and the later Esther. Jerome, bent upon a new version from the Hebrew, and with the natural instincts of a scholar, looked on the Greek version of the LXX. as being faulty, not only in its translation, but in its text. For him the Hebrew Canon was the standard of authority, and he applied without hesitation the term Apocrypha, as equivalent to spurious, to all that were not included in it (*Prol. Gal.*). Augustine shrank from so bold an application of the word. Western Christendom, as a whole, followed his lead, rather than that of Jerome. The doubtful books kept their ground in the MSS. of the Latin Vulgate, and were read and quoted freely as Scripture. It was not till the revival of the study of Hebrew in Western Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, warmly pursued as it was by Luther and his fellow-workers, that the old line of demarcation was drawn more boldly than ever. Luther, following the example of the LXX. that had been printed at Strasburg in 1526, when he published his complete German Bible, in 1534, placed all the books that Jerome had not received together, with the title of "Apocrypha—*i.e.*, books which are not of like worth with Holy Scripture, but are good and useful to be read." His example was followed by Cranmer in the English Bible of 1539, and has obtained in all later versions and editions. The effect of this has been, to some extent, that the word has risen a little in its meaning. While the adjective is used as equivalent to "spurious," and therefore as a term of opprobrium, we use the substantive with a certain measure of respect. The "Apocrypha" are not necessarily thought of as "apocryphal."

Among the books that are now so named, one, 2 Esdras, is certainly of post-Christian origin, and some critics have ascribed the same date to the Wisdom of Solomon, and Judith. These, however, either in the circumstances of the history they contain, or by their pseudonymous authorship, obviously claim attention as belonging to the Old Testament, and are therefore rightly classed among its Apocrypha. The New Testament, however, was not without an apocryphal literature of its own—spurious Gospels of Peter, of the Infancy of Jesus, of Nicodemus, of Matthew, of James; spurious Acts of Philip, of Andrew, of Matthew, of Thomas, of Pilate, of Bartholomew, of John; spurious Epistles of St. Paul to the Laodiceans and to Seneca; spurious Revelations of St. Peter. None of these, however, ever attained to the respectable position occupied by most of the Apocrypha of the Old Testament. They met a vulgar curiosity as to the unrecorded facts of the childhood of Jesus, as to the work that He had done behind the veil in the Descent into Hades. They were read more or less widely, and formed the nucleus of a popular Christian mythology which has left its traces in literature and art. The legends as to the childhood of the Virgin, her betrothal to Joseph when his rod alone budded, and those of all her other suitors remained as they had been before; as to her physical virginity, that remained unaltered after the birth of the Divine Child; the fantastic notions that the gold which the Magi brought was the same as that which the Queen of Sheba had brought to Solomon; that the wood of the Cross had been grown in Paradise as the tree of life; that Calvary was named from the skull of Adam, and that it received the first drops of the blood by which the children of Adam were redeemed; the release of the souls of the Patriarchs from the limbo (*limbus*, the "outer fringe") of Hades into Paradise—all these had their origin in the Apocryphal Gospels; and their appearance in the art of the Renaissance period, as, *e.g.*, in the paintings of Raffaelle and others, is a proof of the hold they had taken upon the imagination—one can hardly say, the mind—of Christendom. But from first to last, happily, they were not received by a single teacher with the slightest claim to authority, nor included in any list of books that ought to be read by Christians publicly or privately. Here and there, as we have seen, books that we now receive were for a time questioned. Here and there, other books might be quoted as Scripture, or bound up with the sacred volume, as the Epistle of Clement is with the Alexandrian MS., or the "Shepherd" of Hermas with the Sinaitic; but none of these spurious Gospels, Acts, or Epistles were ever raised for a moment to the level of the Canonical Scriptures. They remained in the worst sense of the word as *Apocrypha*. The Canon of the New Testament has never varied since the third Council of Carthage. If we have to receive the statement that there was "never any doubt in the Church" about any one of them, with some slight modification, it is yet true that that doubt was never embodied in the decrees of any Synod, and extended no further than the hesitation of individual critics.

## II.—THE TEXT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

I. **Introductory.**—We might have expected, had we been framing the history of a Revealed Religion according to our wishes or *à priori* assumptions, that, so far as it depended on written records, those records would be preserved through successive ages as an authentic standard of appeal. Facts are, however, against all such theories of what ought to have been. Not a single autograph original of any book is known to exist now, nor does any writer of the second or third century say that he had seen such an original. Failing this, we might have fallen back on the notion that each transcriber of the books would be guarded by a supernatural guidance against the usual chances of transcription; that each translator would be taught how to convey the meaning of the original without error in the language of his version. Here also we have to accept facts as we find them. There has been no such perpetual miracle as this theory would require, extending, as it does extend when pushed to its logical conclusions, to the infallibility of every compositor in a printer's office who had to set the type of a Bible in any language. Manuscripts vary, versions differ, printed Bibles are not always free from error. Here also we trace the law in things spiritual which we recognise in things natural.

> "Pater ipse colendi
> Haud facilem esse viam voluit."
>
> ["The Father from whose gift all good things flow,
> No easy path hath oped His truth to know."]

Here also the absence of any immunity from error has tried men's faith and roused them to labour, and labour has received its reward. Accepting probability as the only attainable result, the probability which they have actually attained is scarcely distinguishable from certainty. Experience shows that, had they begun with postulating infallibility somewhere, and accepting its supposed results, inquiry would have ceased, criticism would have slumbered, and errors would have crept in and multiplied without restraint.

II. **The Process of Transcription.**—Dealing, then, with facts, we have to realise to ourselves in what way copies of the books of the New Testament were multiplied. It is obvious that prior to the invention of printing, two methods of such multiplication were possible. A man might place a MS. before him, and copy it with his own hand, or he might dictate it to one or more writers. The former was probably the natural process when Christians were few and poor, when it was a labour of love to transcribe a Gospel or an Epistle for a friend or a Church. The latter became natural, in its turn, when the books were in sufficient demand to be sold by booksellers, or when Christian societies were sufficiently organised, as, *e.g.*, in monasteries, to adopt the methods of the trade. Each process had its own special forms of liability to error. Any one who has corrected a proof-sheet will be able to take a measure of what they are in the former. Any one who has had experience of the results of a dictation lesson can judge what they are in the latter. We may assume that in most cases, where the work was done systematically, there would be a process for correcting the errors of transcription, analogous to that of correcting the errors of the press now. MSS. of the New Testament, as a matter of fact, often bear traces of such correction by one or more hands.

III. **The Sources of Variation.**—Experience shows that in such a process as that described, various readings, more or less of the nature of errors, may arise in many different ways. In some cases they may be entirely involuntary. The eye may mistake what it reads, or pass over a word, or, misled by two lines that end with the same word or syllable, omit even a whole line (as in the omission in many MSS. of "He that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also," in 1 John ii. 23), or, where contractions are employed freely as they were by most Greek writers, might omit or insert the mark that indicated contraction. Thus in the famous passage of 1 Tim. iii. 16, the two renderings, "*God* was manifest in the flesh," and "*Who* was manifested," represent respectively the readings $\overline{\Theta\Sigma}$ (Θεὸς, *God*) and ΟΣ (ὃς, *Who*). Or the ear might mistake the sound of vowels, and so we find *Christos* for *Chrestos* (= "gracious") in 1 Pet. ii. 3, or *Hetairoi* (= "companions") for *Heteroi* (= "others") in Matt. xi. 16, or *Kamilon* (= "a rope") for *Kamelon* (= "a camel") in Luke xviii. 25. In not a few cases, however, the element of will came in, and the variation was made deliberately as an improvement on what the transcriber had before him. Taste, grammatical accuracy, the desire to confirm a doctrine, or to point a moral, or to soften down a hard saying, or avoid a misconstruction, or bring about a closer agreement between one book and another in passages where they were more or less parallel, all these might come into play, according to the temperament and character of the transcribers. Thus, *e.g.*, one set of MSS. gives in Luke xv. 16, *would fain have filled his belly*; and another, aiming apparently at greater refinement, *would have been satisfied*, or *filled*. Some, as has been said, give "*God* was manifested in the flesh," in

1 Tim. iii. 16, and some "*Who* was manifested." So, we find "the only begotten *Son*" and "the only begotten *God*" in John i. 18. Some in Acts xx. 28 give "the Church of *God*," which He hath purchased with His own blood," and some, "the Church of *Christ*," or "the Church of *the Lord*." 1 John v. 7, which speaks of the "three that bear record in heaven," and which is not found in any Greek MS. earlier than the thirteenth century, is manifestly an interpolation of this nature. So some give and some omit the italicised words in the following passages:—

"Whosoever is angry with his brother *without a cause*," Matt. v. 22.
"Thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee *openly*," Matt. vi. 4, 6.
"When men speak all manner of evil against you *falsely*," Matt. v. 11.
"This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer *and fasting*," Mark ix. 29.
"That ye may give yourselves to *fasting and* prayer," 1 Cor. vii. 5.

Or the alteration might be made to avoid a difficulty, as when we find "I go *not yet* up to this feast" for "I go *not* up," in John vii. 8, or "*Joseph* and His mother" for "*His father* and His mother," in Luke ii. 33; or to make one Gospel correspond with another, as when we find "Why *callest thou Me good?*" for "Why *askest thou concerning that which is good?*" in Matt. xix. 17; or to bring the Gospel into closer accord with liturgical usage, as when the doxology was inserted in the Lord's Prayer, in Matt. vi. 13, or the full confession of faith, *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*, put into the mouth of the Ethiopian eunuch, in Acts viii. 37; or to insert introductory words, "the Lord said," "Jesus said unto His disciples," as in some of the Gospels in our Prayer Book; or mere grammatical accuracy might lead the transcriber to reject forms and modes of spelling which the grammarians pronounced inaccurate. The last class, however, affecting form only, does not come under the notice of the student of a translation, nor need it be much dwelt on even by those who study the original.

**IV. Canons of Criticism.**—Men who gave themselves to the work of classifying phenomena such as these, soon found that they had a sufficient basis for the results of an induction. It was easy to note the causes of error, and to frame canons, or rules, by which, in addition to the weight of evidence drawn from the number or antiquity of MSS. and the like, to judge of the authority of this or that reading. Thus, *e.g.*, it has been laid down (1) that *cœteris paribus*, the shorter of two various-readings, is more likely to be the true one; (2) that the same holds good of the more difficult of two readings; or, (3), of one that agrees less closely with another parallel passage. In each case there was a probable motive for the alteration which made the text easier or more complete, while no such motive was likely to work in the opposite direction. Other rules, not resting, as these do, on antecedent probability, but on the nature of the materials with which criticism has to deal, will follow on a survey of those materials.

**V. Manuscripts.**—The extant MSS. of the New Testament are classed roughly in two great divisions, determined by their style of writing. Down to the ninth or tenth century the common usage was to write in capital letters, which, as having been originally of a bold and large type, like those which we use for the title-page of a folio-Bible, were spoken of as *literæ unciales* ("letters an inch big"). The word is thus applied by St. Jerome, and from this use of it the whole class of MSS. so written are known as *Uncials*. Somewhat later a smaller running-hand came to be employed, and the later MSS. are accordingly known as *Cursive*. They begin to appear in the tenth century, and extend to the sixteenth. The invention of printing did away with the demand for copies multiplied by transcription, and with the exception of one or two conspicuous instances of spurious MSS. of parts of the New Testament palmed off upon the unwary as genuine antiquities, none are extant of a later date. Experts in such matters acquire the power of judging, by the style of writing, or the material employed, of the date of a MS. belonging to either class, and in their judgment there are no extant MSS. of any part of the New Testament earlier than the fourth century. Most critics, however, are agreed in assigning a date as early as A.D. 350 to the two known respectively as the Sinaitic, as having been discovered by Tischendorf in the monastery of St. Catherine, on Mount Sinai, and the Vatican, so named as being the great treasure of the library of the Papal palace. Two others, the Alexandrian—sent by Cyril Lucaris, Patriarch of Constantinople, to Charles I., as a precious *Codex*, or MS., that had been brought from Alexandria—and the Codex Ephraem—so called from its having been found underneath the text of the works of Ephraem, a Syrian Father of the fourth century—are ascribed to the middle of the fifth century.* The Cambridge MS., or Codex Bezæ, so called because it was given by Theodore Beza, the French Reformer, to the University of Cambridge in 1562, belongs probably to the latter part of the fifth or the beginning of the sixth century. Others—some complete, and some existing only in fragments, either as originals or as palimpsests—came later, in the seventh or eighth, or even as low as the eleventh century.

As a matter of convenience, to avoid the constant repetition of the names of these and other MSS., a notation has been adopted by which letters of the alphabet stand for them, as follows:—

א (Aleph) for the Sinaitic. This contains the whole of the Greek version of the Old Testament, as well as the New, and the *Shepherd* of Hermas, an allegorical book more or less of the *Pilgrim's Progress* type, ascribed to the second century. It represents the early text that was received at Alexandria.

A. The Alexandrian, containing the Old and New Testaments, a Greek Evening Hymn, a Psalm ascribed to David after the slaughter of Goliath, some Psalms ascribed to Solomon, and the Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians. It is mutilated in parts of St. Matthew and St. John. It represents the text received at Constantinople.

B. The Vatican, containing the Old and New Testaments. This agrees generally with א, as representing the Alexandrian text of the fourth century.

C. The Codex Ephraem; contains portions of most of the Old and New Testaments, 2 Thess. and 2 John having disappeared in the process of cutting up and re-making. It agrees generally with א and B, but has been corrected at Constantinople, and so gives later readings in the margin.

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* This way of using up old MSS., by partially effacing what had first been written with pumice stone, and then writing what was thought of more importance, was a common practice in monasteries. The works of many ancient authors have probably fallen a sacrifice to this economy. MSS. so used are known as *palimpsests*, literally, "re-scraped."

**D.** The Codex Bezæ; contains the Gospels and Acts only, with a Latin version. The presence of the latter shows a Western origin, and the Greek seems to have been copied by an ill-instructed scribe. The Greek text is peculiar, and has more interpolations than any other MS. The Latin represents the version that preceded the Vulgate.

**L.** The Paris Codex, containing the Gospels only, and with several gaps. It agrees generally with א and B.

The MSS. that come between D and L, and others, are not of sufficient importance to claim mention here. It is obvious, as every transcription involves the risk of fresh errors, that the later MSS. must be *primâ facie* of less authority than the more ancient, and hence it is not thought necessary to give in this place any detailed account of the cursive MSS. It is, of course, possible, as some have urged, that they may represent a text more ancient than that of any uncial; but it is clearly against common sense and the laws of evidence to accept a bare possibility on one side against a strong probability on the other, and all that can be allowed in their favour is that where the uncials differ they may come in and help, so far as they can be shown to give an independent testimony, to turn the scale in favour of this or that reading. MSS. that are manifestly copied from the same original, or come from the same school of transcribers, are obviously not independent, and their value is proportionately diminished.

The following Table of New Testament MSS., from Dr. Scrivener's *Introduction*, p. 225, will show the range of materials with which criticism has to deal, and the relative proportions of the two classes:—

| | Uncial. | Cursive. |
|---|---|---|
| Gospels | 34 | 601 |
| Acts and Catholic Epistles | 10 | 229 |
| St. Paul's Epistles | 14 | 283 |
| Revelation | 4 | 102 |
| Evangelistaria (Service Books containing Gospels for the year) | 58 | 183 |
| Apostles (do. containing Epistles for do.) | 7 | 65 |
| | 127 | 1,463 |

Many of these, however, are imperfect, some containing only a few chapters or even verses.

**VI. Versions.**—Over and above MSS. of the actual text of the Greek Testament, we have an important subsidiary help in the translations which were made as soon as the Canon was more or less complete, into this or that language. If we know when a translation was made, we can infer, in most cases with very little room for doubt, what Greek text it was made from; and so can, in some cases, arrive at that which represents an earlier text than any existing MS. Of these versions the most important are—

(1) The Syriac, commonly known as the "Peschito," *i.e.*, the "simple" or "accurate" version, made in the second century. Later Syriac versions were made in the fifth and sixth centuries.

(2) The early Latin version, before Jerome, commonly known as the Italian version. Most of the MSS. belong to the fourth, fifth, or sixth centuries.

(3) Jerome's Latin version, known as the Vulgate (*i.e.*, made in the common or vulgar tongue), represents, of course, the Greek text received in the churches of Palestine, perhaps also in that of Rome, in the fourth century. The most ancient MSS. of this version are of the sixth century.

(4) The Gothic, made by Ulphilas, the Apostle of the Goths, when they settled on the Danube in the fourth century.

(5) The Æthiopic, in the fourth century.

(6) The Armenian, in the fifth century.

**VII. Quotations in the Fathers.**—One other element of evidence, often of considerable importance, comes to the help of the textual critic. The early writers of the Christian Church, of whom we speak commonly as the Fathers, read Scripture, studied it sometimes very carefully, and almost in the modern spirit of critical accuracy, lived in it, and quoted it perpetually in their writings. In some cases, of course, they might quote from memory, subject to the risks incident to such quotations; but as soon as they felt that they were writing for educated men, in the presence of adversaries who would easily fasten upon a blunder or misquotation, they would naturally strive after accuracy, and verify their quotations as they proceeded. The Greek Fathers occupy obviously the first place as giving the words of the text of the Greek Testament, and of these the most important are—Clement of Rome (*circ.* A.D. 91—101), Justin Martyr (A.D. 140—164), Clement of Alexandria (*ob.* A.D. 220), Origen (*ob.* A.D. 254), Irenæus, where we have the Greek text of his works (*ob.* A.D. 200), Athanasius (*ob.* A.D. 373), Eusebius (*ob.* A.D. 338), Chrysostom (*ob.* A.D. 407). The earlier writers are obviously of more authority than the later. That of Origen, on account of his indefatigable labours, and the critical character of his mind, stands as the highest authority of all. Alone, or almost alone, among the early Fathers, he notes, again and again, the various-readings which he found even then existing, as for example "Gadarenes" and "Gergesenes" in Matt. viii. 28; "Bethabara" and "Bethany" in John i. 28; "Barabbas" alone, and "Jesus Barabbas," in Matt. xxvii. 17. Of the Latin Fathers, Tertullian (*ob.* A.D. 240), Cyprian (*ob.* A.D. 257), Ambrose (*ob.* A.D. 397), Augustine (*ob.* A.D. 430), Jerome (*ob.* A.D. 420), are the most important, as giving in their quotations the text of the earlier Latin versions, and so enabling us to judge upon what Greek text they had been based.

**VIII. Results.**—As a rule it is found that the lines of evidence from these classes of materials tend to converge. The oldest MSS., the oldest versions, the quotations from the earlier Fathers present, though not a universal, yet a general agreement. Where differences arise the judgment of one editor may differ from that of another, as to the weight of conflicting witnesses or internal probability; but as correcting the text upon which the Authorised version was based, there is now something like a consensus of editors on most important passages. It has not been thought desirable in this Commentary to bring the evidence in detail before the reader in each individual case; but, as a rule, the readings which are named as "better" than those of our printed Bibles, are such as are supported by convergent evidence as above described, and adopted by one or more of the most eminent scholars in New Testament criticism.

**IX. Printed Text of the Greek Testament.**—It may seem strange at first that the Hebrew text of the Old Testament should have been printed for European use, at Soncino, in 1488, thirty-three years before the Greek text of the New. In the one case, however, we must remember that there was a large Jewish population in almost every great city in Germany, Italy, and France, wanting copies for their synagogues and for private use. In the other, the Latin of the Vulgate satisfied ecclesiastics, and as yet there was not a sufficient number of Greek students even in the Universities of Europe to create a demand for books in that language. During the last quarter of the fifteenth century, however, the knowledge of Greek spread rapidly. When Constantinople was taken by the Turks, refugees fled to Italy and other parts of Western Europe, bringing with them Greek MSS. and offering themselves as instructors. In 1481 a Greek Psalter was printed at Milan, and in a reprint at Venice in 1486 the hymns of Zacharias and the Virgin were added as an appendix, being thus the first portions of the New Testament to which the new art was applied. In 1504 the first six chapters of St. John were appended tentatively to an edition of the poems of Gregory of Nazianzus, published at Venice. About the same time (1502) under Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, the great Cardinal Ximenes, who had founded a University at Alcala, began a grand work on a princely scale. It was by far the noblest task to which the art of printing had as yet been applied. It was to give the Hebrew of the Old Testament, with the Chaldee Targum, or Paraphrase, and the LXX. or Greek version, and the Vulgate. Hebrew and Greek lexicons were appended, and something like a dictionary of proper names. MSS. were borrowed from several quarters, chiefly from the Vatican Library at Rome. The work went on slowly; and was not completed till 1517, four months before the Cardinal's death; nor published till 1522, after it had received the approval of Leo X. in 1520. The edition is commonly known as the Complutensian from *Complutum*, the Latin name of Alcala. Meantime Erasmus, the head of the Humanists, or Greek scholars of Germany, had been employed in 1515 by Froben, the head of an enterprising publishing house at Basle, to bring out a Greek Testament, which was to get the start of the Complutensian. The work was done hurriedly in less than a year, and the book appeared in February, 1516. But little care had been taken in collecting MSS., and in some cases we find somewhat bold conjectural interpolations. The omission of 1 John v. 7 was, however, a sign that a spirit of honest criticism was at work. Erasmus had not found it in any Greek MS., and therefore he would not insert it. A second edition appeared in 1519, and in 1522 a third, in which, through fear of giving offence, he had restored the disputed text on the strength of a single MS. of the thirteenth century, now in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, and known as the *Codex Montfortianus.* Later editions followed in 1527 and 1535.

Paris, however, soon took the lead in meeting the demand, now rapidly increasing, partly through the labours of Erasmus, and partly through the theological excitement of the time, for copies of the Greek Testament. After an edition by Simon de Colines (Colinæus), in 1543, of no great importance, the foremost place was taken by Robert Etienne (or Stephanus), and maintained afterwards by his son Henry. His first edition, based upon collations of MSS. in the Royal Library at Paris with the Complutensian text, appeared in 1546; another in 1549. A third, in 1550, was on a larger scale, and gave for the first time—thus marking an epoch in the progress of textual criticism—a systematic collection of various-readings to the number of 2,194. A fourth edition, published in 1551 at Geneva, and therefore intended primarily, we may believe, for the use of the pastors and students of the Reformed Church there, is remarkable as giving for the first time the present division into verses. The work of Henri Etienne went on, guided in 1556 by Beza, and the text, as revised by him (not very critically), was printed in successive editions in 1565, 1576, 1582, and 1598. The name of the great Reformer stamped the work with a sanction which most Protestant students recognised. The editions were widely circulated in England, where as yet no Greek Testament had issued from the press; and this and the earlier text of Etienne were probably in the hands of the translators of the Authorised version.

The house of Elzevir, at Leyden, famous for the beauty of type and the "diamond" editions which we now associate with the name, took up the work at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and a Greek Testament, almost perfect in typography, was issued in 1624, and another in 1633. Both were based, as far as the text was concerned, upon the later editions of Etienne and Beza, and in the Preface to the latter, the editor assured the reader that he could now rely on having an undisputed text (*textum ab omnibus receptum*). The boast was not without foundation, and it tended, for a time at least, to secure its own fulfilment. Most English editions in the seventeenth century reproduced it with hardly any variation, and the *Textus receptus,* though no critic now receives it as a whole, still keeps its ground as a standard of comparison. We measure the value of MSS., for the most part, by the extent to which they differ from or agree with it.

The spirit that craves for accuracy as an element of truth, was, however, still active in England, as elsewhere. The arrival of the Alexandrian MS. (see above) attracted the notice of scholars. They began to feel the importance of versions as bearing on the text, and in Bishop Walton's famous Polyglot Bible, the Syriac, Arabic, Persian, and Æthiopic versions were printed side by side with the text of Etienne, and various-readings were given, though not very fully, from the Alexandrian, the Cambridge, and fourteen other MSS. The work of collecting and comparing these and other materials was carried on for thirty years with unremitting industry by Dr. John Mill, Professor of Divinity at Oxford, and in 1706 the labours of his life were crowned, just before his death, by the publication of an edition of the Greek Testament in two folio volumes, which, while practically retaining the text of Etienne—*i.e.*, the *Textus receptus,* contained a far larger mass of materials, and a more thorough examination of their relative value than had ever been before attempted. The Prolegomena extended over 180 pages; the various-readings were reckoned at 30,000. The shallow scepticism of the Free-thinkers of the time assumed that all grounds for certainty as to the contents of the New Testament writings had vanished. Timid and prejudiced theologians took up the cry that textual criticism was dangerous. It found, however, a sufficiently able apologist in Richard Bentley, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. He urged with great power and success, in a pamphlet published under the pseudonym of *Phileleutherus Lipsiensis,* in 1714, that truth has no need to fear truth; that if the existence of the various-readings is compatible with the Christian faith, the knowledge of their existence cannot be fatal to it; that it was with the New Testament, as with other ancient books, a help and not a hindrance, to have to edit from many MSS., and not from one only, which might chance to be defective; that every fresh discovery of variations was, therefore, a step to certainty; and that the result had been to fix the range of possible uncertainty within such narrow limits that no single fact or doctrine of the religion of Christ was imperilled by it. Bentley himself aspired to take a high place among the workers whom he thus defended, and, in 1716, sketched out a plan for printing a revised Greek text, on principles which presented a singular approximation to those that have since been acted on by Lachmann and Tregelles. He believed that it was possible to ascertain from the uncial MSS., the early versions, and the early Fathers, what text was received in the fifth century, and was prepared to reject all later variations. Acting on those principles, he proposed to use the materials which Mill's indefatigable labours had collected.

Bentley was, however, involved in personal troubles and disputes which hindered the accomplishment of his purpose, and for a long series of years the work was left to be carried on by the scholars of Germany, while English students were content to accept, with scarcely any inquiry, the text which was known as Mill's, but which practically hardly differed at all from the *Textus receptus*. Among the former the most conspicuous was Bengel (1734), whose essentially devout Commentary bore witness that criticism did not necessarily lead to scepticism, that he was a verbal critic mainly because he believed in verbal inspiration. He was followed by Griesbach (1774—1806), Scholz (1830—36), and by Lachmann (1831), who avowedly looked on himself as Bentley's disciple, working on his lines, and completing the work which he had left unfinished. The list culminates in Tischendorf, the labours of whose life in collating and publishing, often in *fac simile*, MSS. of the highest value (among others the Codex Ephraim) were crowned by the discovery, in 1859, of the Sinaitic MS. Two countrymen of our own—Dr. S. P. Tregelles (*d.* 1876), and the Rev. Dr. Scrivener—may claim a high place in the list of those who, with unshaken faith, have consecrated their lives to the work of bringing the printed text of the Greek Testament to the greatest possible accuracy. Alford and Wordsworth, in their editions of the Greek Testament, though not professing to do more than use the materials collected by others, have yet done much to bring within the reach of all students the results of textual criticism. In Dr. Tregelles's *Introduction to the New Testament*, Dr. Scrivener's *Introduction to New Testament Criticism*, and Mr. Hammond's *Outlines of New Testament Criticism*, in the *Clarendon Press Series*, the student who wishes to go more fully into the subject will find ample information. Of these Lachmann and Tregelles are, perhaps, the boldest in setting aside the *Textus receptus* in deference to the authority of the uncial MSS. and the early Fathers; Scrivener and Wordsworth, and more recently Mr. Maclellan, in maintaining the probability that the cursive MSS., upon which the *Textus receptus* was mainly based, though themselves of late date, may represent an ancient text of higher authority than that of the oldest existing uncials.

## III.—THE ENGLISH VERSIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

**I. The Earlier Versions.**—Wherever men have believed in earnest that they had the ground-work of their faith in God mainly or wholly in a written record, it is natural that they should desire, if their religion has any life and energy, to have that book in the speech to which they were born, and in which they think. The religious life of our early English, or Anglo-Saxon, forefathers, after their conversion by Augustine, was a deep and earnest life; and as soon as schools and monasteries gave men the power to study the Scriptures in the Latin of the Vulgate translation, portions of them were translated into Anglo-Saxon. There were versions of the Psalms in the eighth century. Bede, as in the well-known narrative of his scholar Cuthbert, died (A.D. 735) in the act of finishing the last chapter of St. John's Gospel. Alfred prefixed a translation of the Ten Commandments, and some other portions of Exodus, to his Code of Laws (A.D. 901). The Homilies of Ælfric (*ob.* A.D. 1005) must have made many passages of Scripture familiar to lay as well as clerical readers. In the tenth century the four Gospels were translated; a little later, the Pentateuch, and other portions of the Old Testament. Most of these were made of necessity from the Vulgate, without reference to the originals. Hebrew was utterly unknown, and the knowledge of Greek, which Theodore of Tarsus (*ob.* A.D. 690) brought with him to the See of Canterbury, did not spread. Here and there only, as in the case of Bede, who spent his life in the Monastery of Jarrow, founded by Benedict Biscop, do we find any traces of it, and even in him it hardly goes beyond the explanation here and there of a few isolated terms. There are no signs that he had studied a single chapter of a Gospel in the Greek. It was natural, when the Norman rule, introducing a higher culture through the medium of two languages, one of which was dead, and the other foreign, repressed the spontaneous development of that which it had found in existence, that these versions should drop into disuse, and be forgotten. At the best they were but tentative steps to a goal which was never reached.

**II. Wycliffe.**—The stirrings of spiritual and intellectual life in the thirteenth century, mainly under the influence of the Franciscan and Dominican Orders in the Universities of Europe, led, in the first instance, to the development of a logical and metaphysical system of theology, of which the works of the great schoolmen, Peter Lombard (*ob.* A.D. 1164) and Thomas Aquinas (*ob.* A.D. 1274), furnish the most complete examples. This was, for the most part, subservient to the great scheme of a spiritual universal monarchy on the part of the Bishop of Rome, which found its most prominent representatives in Innocent III. (*ob.* A.D. 1216) and Boniface VIII. (*ob.* A.D. 1303). The teaching of Scripture was still formally the basis of that of the schoolmen, but it was Scripture as found in the Vulgate and commented on by the Fathers; and, practically, the comments and glosses of the doctors took the place of the text. Against this, whenever men found themselves on any ground, political or theological, opposed to Rome, there was, in due course, a natural reaction. Roger Bacon (*ob.* A.D. 1292), who certainly knew some Greek and a little Hebrew, is loud in his complaints of the corrupt state of the current text of the Vulgate, and of its defects as a translation. Devotional minds turned then, as always, to the Psalms, as giving utterance at once to the passionate complaints and the fervent hopes of men in dark and troublous times; and three English versions of them belong to the first half of the fourteenth century. It was significant, as an indication of what was ripening for the future, that the first book of the New Testament to be translated into English should have been the Revelation of St. John. The evils of the time were great. Men's minds were agitated by wild communistic dreams of a new social order, and by the false revelation of a so-called Everlasting Gospel, ascribed to the Abbot Joachim of Calabria (*ob.* A.D. 1202). It seemed to John Wycliffe, in A.D. 1356, that men would find the guidance which they needed in the Apocalypse, and with this accordingly he began. He soon formed, however, the wider plan of making the whole Bible accessible to his countrymen. It seemed to him, as John of Gaunt put it in a speech before the King's Council, a shameful thing that other nations, French, Gascons, and the Bohemians, who, in the person of the wife of Richard II. had supplied England with a queen, should have the Scriptures in their own tongue, and that Englishmen should not. The next step accordingly was a translation of the Gospels, with a commentary; and by 1380 there was a complete English New Testament. A version of the Old Testament was begun by Nicholas de Hereford, and carried on to the middle of the book of Baruch, which then stood after Jeremiah, when, as is seen in the original MS. in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, his work was interrupted, probably by an ecclesiastical prosecution, which first summoned him to London, and then drove him into exile. Wycliffe, or some fellow-worker, finished it before his death, in 1384. A few years afterwards it was carefully revised throughout by another disciple, John Purvey, whose text is that commonly printed (as in Forshall and Madden's edition) as Wycliffe's version.

There is much that is touching in the history of the work thus accomplished, as Purvey describes it in his Preface. It was hard to get at the true text of the Vulgate; harder often to understand it. He felt that it was a task that required the consecration of all powers, "to live a clean life, and be full devout in prayer;" but he laboured on in the belief that his toil would not be fruitless. "By this manner, with good living and great travail, men may come to clear and true translating, and true understanding of Holy Writ, seem it never so hard at the beginning." A work so begun and completed could hardly fail of success. It met a great want, and in spite of all the difficulty and cost of multiplying books by hand, and the active measures taken by Archbishop Arundel, under Henry V. (*ob.* A.D. 1413), not fewer than 170 copies of the whole, or part, of one or other of the versions, most of them of the Revised text, are still extant. The greater part appear to have been made between 1420 and 1450; nearly half of them being of a portable size, as if men desired to have them in daily use. The book was clearly in great demand, and though the "Lollardie," with which it was identified, was suppressed by the strong arm of persecution, it doubtless helped to keep alive the spirit of religious freedom.

Wycliffe's version did not profess to have been made from the original, and it had, therefore, against it all the chances of error that belong to the translation of a translation. Thus, to confine ourselves to a few instances from the New Testament, the "Pontifex," which stands for High Priest in Heb. ix. 11, 25, and elsewhere, is rendered by "Bishop"; the "knowledge of salvation," in Luke i. 77, appears, as from the *scientia salutis* of the Vulgate, transformed into the "science of health"; for "repent," in Matt. iii. 2, we have "do ye penance"; for "mystery," in Eph. v. 32, "sacrament." The "villages" of the Gospels are turned into "castles" (Luke x. 38); the "soldiers" into "knights"; "pearls" into "margarites"; "unlearned men" into "idiots."

III. **Tyndale.**—The work of giving an English Bible to the English people had to be done over again, in one sense, under happier conditions. Under the influence of the great Renaissance movement, Greece "had risen from the grave," to modify a well-known saying, "with Plato in one hand for the scholars of Italy, but with the New Testament in the other for those of Germany and England." The printing-presses of all countries were at work to multiply and transmit the labours of all scholars from one country to another. The results, as far as the printed text of the Greek Testament is concerned, have already been described above. An impulse had been given to the study of Greek at Oxford by Grocyn (*ob.* A.D. 1519) and Linacre (*ob.* A.D. 1524), who went to Italy to learn what was almost as a newly-discovered language, and was carried forward by Colet, the founder of St. Paul's School (*ob.* A.D. 1519), and Sir Thomas More (*ob.* A.D. 1535), who, as a layman, gave lectures in one of the city churches on the Epistle to the Romans. Lexicons and grammars began to issue from the press. Erasmus, the great scholar of the age, studied Greek at Oxford, and taught it at Cambridge from 1509 to 1524. It was in vain that the adherents of the old scholastic methods urged that the study of Greek would probably make men Pagan, and that those who read Hebrew were in danger of becoming Jews; in vain that the editors of the Complutensian Bible compared the position of the Vulgate version of the Old Testament with the Hebrew text on one side, and the LXX. version on the other, to that of Christ crucified between the two thieves. Culture asserted the claim of classical studies to be the *literæ humaniores* of education, and men were not slow to discover that without a true and thorough "humanity" in that sense of the word, there could be no true theology.

Foremost in the great work which, carried on step by step through nearly a century, ended in 1611 in what is known as the Authorised version,* stands the name of William Tyndale. Born in 1484, studying at Oxford under Grocyn and Linacre, carrying on his Greek studies under Erasmus at Cambridge in 1510, attracted by the new theology of Luther, as he had been before by the new learning of his great rival, he formed the purpose of turning laymen into theologians. Himself a "priest," and more devout and thoughtful than his fellows, he was among the first—perhaps in England quite the first—to realise the truth, that the work of the ministers of the Church was to be not priests, in the scholastic and mediæval sense, but preachers of the Word. At the age of thirty-six he declared his purpose, "if God spared his life, to make a boy that driveth a plough to know more of Scripture than the Pope;" and from that purpose, through all the changes and chances of his life, he never swerved, even for a single hour.

The main features of that life can be stated here but very briefly. Bent upon his work, and knowing that Tunstal, Bishop of London, stood high in repute among the scholars and humanists of the time, he came up to London, in 1522, in the hope of enlisting his support, and presented himself with a translation of one of the Orations of Isocrates as a proof of his competency. He was met with delays and rebuffs, and found that he was not likely to gain help from him or any other prelate. He was forced to the conclusion that, "not only was there no room in my Lord of London's palace to translate the New Testament, but also there was no place to do it in all England."

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* The name seems to have been attached to it from the fact that it was undertaken at James I.'s command, and dedicated to him, and that the title-page spoke of it as "appointed to be read in churches." Historians have, however, sought in vain for any Act of Parliament, Vote of Convocation, Order in Council, or other official document so appointing it. Practically, it has tacitly received its sanction from being exclusively printed by the King's printers' and the University presses; but simply as a matter of strict law, the Act of Parliament which authorised the Great Bible remains unrepealed, and that is, therefore, still the only version authorised by law.

He accordingly went abroad, first to Hamburg, and began with versions of St. Matthew and St. Mark with marginal notes; thence to Cologne, where his work was interrupted by one of Luther's bitterest opponents, Cochlæus; thence, with his printed sheets, to Worms, four years after Luther's famous entry into that city. From its presses came two editions—one in octavo, the other in quarto—in 1525. They appeared without his name. Six thousand copies were struck off. They soon found their way to England. Their arrival had been preceded by rumours which roused an eager desire in some, fear and a hot enmity in others. The King and the Bishops ordered it to be seized, or bought up, and burnt. Tunstal preached against it at St. Paul's Cross, declaring that he had found 2,000 errors in it. Sir T. More wrote against it as being both heretical and unscholarly. The Reforming spirit was, however, gaining ground. Tyndale defended himself successfully against More's criticisms. The books were eagerly read by students and tutors at Oxford and Cambridge. They were given by friend to friend as precious treasures. The very process of buying up created a demand which was met by a fresh supply. The work of destruction was, however, thorough. Of six editions, three genuine, three surreptitious, there were probably 15,000 copies printed. Of these, in strange contrast to the 170 MS. copies of Wycliffe's version, some four or five only, the greater part incomplete and mutilated, have come down to our own time.

Meanwhile Tyndale went on with his work. The prominence of the Jewish element at Worms, the synagogue of which is said to be one of the oldest in Western Europe, may have helped him to a more accurate knowledge of Hebrew. Jewish editions of the Old Testament had been published by Bomberg in 1518 and 1523. A new Latin translation from the Hebrew text was published by Pagninus in 1527. Luther's Pentateuch had appeared in 1523; the Historical Books and Hagiographa in 1524. A like work was carried on simultaneously by Zwingli and other scholars at Zurich. Tyndale was not slow to follow, and the Pentateuch appeared in 1530; Jonah in 1534. The latter year witnessed the publication of a revised edition of his New Testament, of three unauthorised editions at Antwerp, with many alterations of which Tyndale did not approve, by George Joye, an over-zealous and not very scrupulous disciple. In Tyndale's own edition, short marginal notes were added, the beginnings and endings of the lessons read in church were marked, and prologues prefixed to the several books. The state of things in England had been altered by the king's divorce, and marriage with Anne Boleyn, and in return for her good offices on behalf of an Antwerp merchant who had suffered in his cause, Tyndale presented her with a copy (now in the British Museum) printed upon vellum, and illuminated. The inscription *Anna Regina Angliæ*, in faded red letters, may still be traced on the gilded edges. So far, Tyndale lived to see of the travail of his soul; but his work was nearly over. The enemies of the Reformation in Flanders hunted him down under the persecuting edicts of Charles V., and in October, 1536, he suffered at the stake at Vilvorde, near Brussels, breathing the prayer of longing hope, as seeing far off the Pisgah vision of a good land on which he was not himself to enter, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes." So passed to his rest the truest and noblest worker in the English Reformation.

The labours of Tyndale as a translator of the New Testament were important, not only because he prepared the way as a pioneer for those who were to follow him, but because, to a great extent, he left a mark upon the work which endures to this day. The feeling that his task was to make a Bible for the English people kept him from the use of pedantic "ink-horn" terms belonging to the vocabulary of scholars, and varying with their fashions, and gave him an almost instinctive tact in choosing the phrases and turn of speech, which happily have not yet disappeared, and we may add, are not likely to disappear, in any process of revision. And this, we must remember, required at the time a courage which we cannot easily estimate. The dominant feeling of ecclesiastics was against translating the Bible at all. Those who did not openly oppose it, such as Gardiner and those who acted with him, surrounded their consent with reservations of all kinds. The dignity of Scripture was to be secured by keeping its language as distinct as possible from that of the common people. Time-honoured and ecclesiastical words, on which the Church had, as it were, stamped its seal, were to be used as largely as possible. Tyndale's leading idea was precisely the opposite of this. He felt that the scholastic theology of the time had so surrounded the language of Christ and His Apostles with new associations, that their meaning, or what has been called their connotation, was practically altered for the worse; and it seemed to him that the time was come for laying the axe to the root of the tree by the exclusion of the terms which had thus been spoilt for common use. And at first the work was done with a thoroughness in which subsequent revisers have not had the courage to follow him. "Congregation" uniformly instead of "church," "favour" often instead of "grace," "mystery" instead of "sacrament," "overseer" instead of "bishop," "repentance" instead of "penance," "elder" instead of "priest," "love" instead of "charity," "acknowledge" instead of "confess." It was just this feature in Tyndale's work that roused the keenest indignation on the part of the Bishops of the English Church, and even of scholars like Sir Thomas More; and made Ridley (the uncle of the martyr) say of it, not untruly as appearances went, that his translation was "accursed and damned (condemned) by the consent of the prelates and learned men." If we wish to picture to ourselves what might have been the result had Tyndale acted as the "prelates and learned men" would have had him act, we may see it in the Rhemish New Testament. If we ask what shape his translation might have taken had he been only a scholar and a critic, we may find the answer in the fragments of a translation left by Sir John Cheke, the great scholar—

> "Who first taught Cambridge and King Edward Greek."

The first process would have given us "azymes" for "unleavened bread"; "evacuated from Christ" (Gal. v. 4); "the justifications of our Lord" (Luke i. 6); "longanimity" (Rom. ii. 4); "sicer," for "strong drink" (Luke i. 15); "replenished with fear" (Luke v. 26); "the specious gate of the Temple" (Acts iii. 2); "a greater host" (Heb. xi. 4); "contemning confusion" (Heb. xii. 2); the "consummator, Jesus" (*Ibid.*)—and so on through a thousand instances. The second, with a pedantry of a different kind, would have given "biword" for "parable," "frosent" for "apostle," "freshmen" for "proselytes," "uprising" for "resurrection," "gainbirth" for "regeneration," and the like. Instead of such monstrosities, we have a version which represents as accurate a scholarship as was possible under the then conditions of culture, and the faithfulness of one who felt that what he was dealing with contained God's message to mankind, and never consciously tampered with its meaning. Two testimonies to its value may well close this brief account of it. One is from the pen of the most eminent of modern English historians. "The peculiar genius—if such a word may be permitted—which breathes through it, the mingled tenderness and simplicity, the Saxon simplicity, the preternatural grandeur, unequalled, unapproached, in the attempted improvements of modern scholars—all are here—and bear the impress of the mind of one man, William Tyndale" (Froude, *History of England*, iii. p. 84). The other comes from one who seems to have felt keenly the change which he found when he had to quote the phrases of the Rhemish version, almost, as it were, to think in it, instead of those with which his youth and manhood had been familiar, and after which he now sighs with the vain wish that, being what it is, it was with Rome and not against her. "It was surely a most lucky accident for the young religion that, while the English language was coming to the birth with its special attributes of nerve, simplicity, and vigour, at its very first breathings Protestantism was at hand to form it upon its own theological *patois*, and to educate it as the mouth-piece of its tradition. So, however, it was to be; and soon,

'As in this bad world below
Holiest things find vilest using,'

the new religion employed the new language for its purposes, in a great undertaking—the translation of its own Bible; a work which, by the purity of its diction and the strength and harmony of its style, has deservedly become the very model of good English, and the standard of the language to all future times" (J. H. Newman, *Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics*, p. 66).

IV. **Tyndale's successors.**—In this, as in the history of most great enterprises, it was true that "one soweth, and another reapeth." Other men, with less heroism and less genius, entered into the labours of the martyr of Vilvorde. The limits of this *Introduction* exclude a full account of the work of his successors. It will be enough to note briefly the stages through which it passed till it reached what was to be its close and consummation for more than two centuries and a half.

(1) First in order came COVERDALE (born, 1485; died, 1565), afterwards, under Elizabeth, Bishop of Exeter. In him we find a diligent and faithful worker, and we owe to him the first complete translation of the whole Bible, published in 1535. Partly, perhaps, from his inferior scholarship, partly from a wish to conciliate at once the followers of Luther and those who had been accustomed to the Vulgate, he did not even profess to have had recourse to the original text, but was content with announcing on his title-page that it was "truly translated out of the Douche" (*i.e.*, German) "and Latyn." Tyndale for the New Testament, Luther's version and the Zurich Bible of Zwingli for the Old, were his chief authorities; but he was less consistent than Tyndale, and deliberately defends his inconsistency, in not excluding the words that had become associated with scholastic definitions. He uses, *e.g.*, "penance" as well as "repentance," "priest" as well as "elder," "charity" as well as "love." "Congregation," however, keeps its ground as against "church." Reprints of this version appeared in 1536 and 1537, and even in 1550 and 1553. Among smaller facts connected with this version we may note that the Latin *Biblia*, and not *Bible*, appears on the title page; that the Hebrew letters forming the name of *Jehovah* are also there; and that the alphabetic elegies of the Book of Lamentations have the Hebrew letters attached to their respective verses. There are no notes, no chapter headings, nor division into verses.

(2) MATTHEW'S BIBLE appeared in 1537, and is memorable as having been dedicated to Henry VIII. and his Queen, Jane Seymour, and set forth "with the kinge's most gracyous license." Who the Thomas Matthew was, by whom the book purports to be translated, no one knows. There was no scholar of repute of that name; and though his name is attached to the dedication, the exhortation to the study of Scripture has the initials J. R. as a signature. Possibly, Thomas Matthew was, as some have supposed, a simple *alias* assumed by John Rogers, afterwards the proto-martyr of the Marian persecution, in order that the name of one who was known to have been a friend of Tyndale's might not appear with an undue prominence on the title-page. Possibly he was a layman, who made himself responsible for the cost of printing. The book was printed in large folio. Through Cromwell's influence, which was then in the ascendant, backed by Cranmer's—partly also, we may conjecture, through Matthew's name appearing as the translator instead of Rogers's—the king's license was obtained without difficulty. The publishers (Grafton and Whitchurch) were bold enough to ask for a monopoly for five years; to suggest that "every curate" (*i.e.*, parish priest) should be compelled to buy one copy, and every abbey six. As a literary work, Rogers's translation is of a composite character. The Pentateuch and New Testament are reprinted from Tyndale, the Books of the Old Testament, from Ezra to Malachi, from Coverdale. From Joshua to 2 Chronicles we have a new translation. The most noticeable feature of the book was found in the marginal notes, which made a kind of running commentary on the text, and which were, for the most part, of a strong Lutheran character. It is scarcely conceivable that the king could have read, with any care, the book to which he thus gave his sanction. As it was, a copy was ordered to be set up in every parish church, and Matthew's Bible was the first Authorised version.

(3) It was, perhaps, in part, owing to the antagonism which Rogers's notes naturally roused, that it was scarcely published before another version was begun under Cromwell's authority. Coverdale was called on to undertake the task of revision, and he and Bonner (names strangely joined) were for a time acting together in getting it printed at Paris, and transmitting the sheets to London. The notes disappeared, and a marginal hand took their place, indicating the "dark places" that required the comment which Coverdale was not allowed to write. This also came out in an extra-sized folio, and is known, therefore, as the GREAT BIBLE, It had no dedication, but there was an elaborate frontispiece title-page, engraved, probably, from Holbein's designs, representing the king on his throne, giving the *Verbum Dei* to Cromwell and Cranmer, while they in their turn distribute it to clergy and laity. It appeared with a preface by Cranmer in 1540, and a copy of it was ordered to be set up in every church. Other editions followed, two in the same year, and three in 1541. In the third and fifth of these two new names appear on the title-page (the first two editions having

been issued without the name of any translator) as having revised the work—Tunstal, then Bishop of Durham, and Heath, Bishop of Rochester. The impulse which Tyndale had given had told even on the man to whom he had applied in vain for support at the outset of his career, and as by the strange irony of history, he who had been foremost in condemning Tyndale's version as dangerous, full of errors, and heretical, was now found giving the sanction of his name to a translation which was, at least, largely based on that version. It is significant that under this editorship even the marginal "hands" of Coverdale's unfulfilled intentions disappeared, and the Bishops were thus committed to what twenty years before they had shrunk from and denounced, the policy of giving to the English people a Bible in their own tongue without note or comment. It was well that all this was done when it was. Cromwell's fall, in July, 1540, was followed by a time of reaction, in which Gardiner and Bonner gained the ascendant. They did not, however, venture to recall the step that had thus been taken, and the Great Bible, chained to its desk in every church, and allowed, for some years, at least, to be read out of service-time to any who chose to listen, did a work which not even the king's proclamations against discussing its teaching, nor Bonner's threats to withdraw the Bibles unless the discussions were suppressed, were able to undo. It remained the Authorised version, recognised in the Liturgical Reforms under Edward VI., and from it accordingly were taken the Psalms, which appeared in the Prayer Books of that reign, and have kept their place through all revisions to the present day. The version, as a whole, was based upon Coverdale and Tyndale, with alterations made more or less under the influence of the Latin versions of Erasmus for the New Testament, and the Vulgate for the Old. All readers of the English Prayer Book Psalms have accordingly the means of comparing this translation with that of the Authorised version;* and, probably, the general impression is in favour of the Prayer Book version as being, though less accurate, more rhythmical and harmonious in its turns of phraseology; often with a felicitous ring in its cadences, that seems, even when the Psalms are read, to carry with it a music of its own. A certain ostentation of learning is seen in the appearance of the Hebrew names of books, such, *e.g.*, as *Bereschith* (Genesis), *Velle Shemoth* (Exodus). On the other hand, by what was obviously the hasty substitution of what was thought a more respectful term than Apocrypha, the books which are now classed under that head are said to be "called *Hagiographa*" (*i.e.*, "sacred writings"), because they "were read in secret and apart."

(4) Nearly contemporaneous with the Great Bible—issuing from the press, indeed, before it—another translation was published in London (1539), by RICHARD TAVERNER, who had been a student at Cardinal College, afterwards Christ Church, at Oxford. It affords the attraction of the running commentary on the text, which the editors of the Great Bible had deliberately omitted, and on this ground found the acceptance which is indicated by two editions, folio and quarto, of the whole Bible, and two, quarto and octavo, of the New Testament, in the same year, followed by a subsequent reprint. It never occupied, however, any position of authority, nor had it any traceable influence on subsequent versions. It deserves to be noted, however—as if each translation was to have something specially memorable connected with it—as an instance of a layman's scholarship and devotion, of the assertion of a layman's right to translate, publish, comment on, the Sacred Books. The work which Taverner had done in this way was so far recognised, that in the reign of Edward VI. he received a special license to preach, and performed his office with an almost ostentatious disregard of conventional rules of costume, preaching, not in the dress of his university degree, but in velvet hat, damask gown, gold chain, and sword.

(5) THE GENEVA BIBLE. The last five years of the reign of Henry VIII. were conspicuously a time of reaction, but it kept, as has been said, within limits. The old horror of Tyndale's name revived, and all books bearing his name were ordered to be destroyed. The notes in all editions that had them—*i.e.*, Matthew's and Taverner's—were to be erased. No women, except those of noble and gentle birth, no men below what we should call the upper middle-class, were to read the Bible, publicly or privately, to others, or by themselves. Coverdale's New Testament was proscribed, as well as Tyndale's, and this involved in most instances the destruction of the whole Bible that bore his name. Gardiner proposed that a translation should be made by the Bishops (Tunstal and Heath now disavowing the work of revision, for which the title-page of the Great Bible made them responsible), and urged the retention in the original Latin of every ecclesiastical or theological term, and even of others, such as *oriens*, *simplex*, *tyrannus*, in which he seemed to see a peculiar and untranslatable force. That project happily fell through. The matter was discussed in Convocation, and referred to the universities, but nothing more was done. The Great Bible kept its position as the Authorised translation.

Under Edward VI. the attention of Cranmer and the other reforming bishops was occupied with the more urgent work of liturgical reformation, and though many reprints of both Bibles and New Testaments issued from the press, and were eagerly purchased, nothing was done towards a new revision, beyond the appointment of two foreign reformers, Fagius and Bucer, to professorships at Cambridge, with a view to their undertaking such a work. The former was to take the Old Testament, the latter the New. They were to write notes on dark and obscure places, and reconcile those that seemed repugnant to each other. Their work was hindered by illness, and the accession of Mary, in 1553, put a stop to this or any like enterprise.

The work was, however, done for England, though not in England, and in 1557, the last year of Mary's reign, a New Testament, with copious notes, was printed at Geneva, with an introductory epistle by Calvin. The work appeared anonymously, but it was probably by Whittingham, one of the English refugees, who had married Calvin's sister. For the first time in the history of the English Bible the chapters were divided into verses, after the manner with which we are familiar, and so the facility of reference and verifying quotations was enormously increased. The example of such a division had been set, as stated above (*Introduction on the Text of the New Testament*), in the Greek Testament published by Stephens (or Etienne) in 1551; but there the verses were only noted in the margin, as is done, for example, in the Oxford reprint of Mill's Greek Testament. It was also the first translation printed in Roman type, and so presenting a clearer and easier page to the reader. The work was carried on by Whittingham, Coverdale, and others, after the accession of Elizabeth, for two years, and the whole Bible was published in 1560. Of all English versions before that of 1611, it was by far the most popular. Size, price, type, notes, division into verses, made it for more than half a century the household Bible of the English people. In most of the editions after 1578 it was accompanied by a useful Bible Dictionary. It was found in every family. It was the text-book of every student. It came in opportunely to fill up the gap which had been caused by the wholesale destruction of Bibles in the latter years of Henry VIII., and during the whole reign of Mary. It was only slowly displaced by that which we now know as the Authorised version—several editions being printed after 1611—and from one point of view it may be questioned whether there was not loss as well as gain in the displacement. The presence of notes, even if they were, like those of the Geneva Bible, somewhat over-dogmatic and controversial in their tone, was yet at once an incentive and a help to a thoughtful study of Scripture. The reader could find some answer—often a clear and intelligent answer—to the questions that perplexed him, and was not tempted, as a Bible without note or comment tempts men, to a mechanical and perfunctory perusal. For good or for evil, and it is believed that the former greatly predominated, it was the Geneva version that gave birth to the great Puritan party, and sustained it through its long conflict in the reigns of Elizabeth and James. So far as the religion of the peasantry of Scotland has been stamped with a more intelligent and thoughtful character than that of the same class in England, the secret may be found in the more enduring influence of this version among them. Among its other distinctive features it may be noted (1) that it omitted the name of St. Paul in the title of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and left the authorship an open question, and (2) that it avowed the principle of putting words not in the original in italics. One of the English editions of this version is that commonly known as the "Breeches Bible," from its use of that word instead of "aprons" in Gen. iii. 7.

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* The use of the "Morians' land" (*i.e.*, the land of the Moors), in the Prayer Book, where the Bible version has "Ethiopia" (Pss. lxviii. 31, lxxxvii. 4), may be noted as a prominent instance of the influence of Luther's version, which gives *Mohrenland*, working through Coverdale. Besides the Psalms we find traces of this version in the *Sentences* of the Communion Service, and in phrases such as "worthy fruits of penance" and the like. From it, too, come the quotations in the Homilies.

As compared with the Great Bible, the Geneva version shows a careful work of comparison and revision. In the Old Testament the revisers were helped both by the Latin and the French translations of foreign Protestant scholars, especially by the Latin New Testament of Theodore Beza, and by the notes attached to it. Beza's scholarship was above the level of that of most of his contemporaries, and in many instances the corrections which were introduced on his authority in the Geneva version have been recognised by later revisers, and have found their place in the Authorised version. On the other hand, he was somewhat over-bold in dealing with the Greek text of the New Testament, substituting conjecture for the patient work of laborious criticism; and in this respect his influence was mischievous. On the whole, however, the work was well and faithfully done, and was so far a great step forward to the consummation in which the English people were to rest for more than two centuries and a half.

(6) The Bishops' Bible. The popularity of the Geneva version, its acknowledged superiority to the Great Bible which was then the Authorised version of the Church of England, coupled, perhaps, with a slight feeling of alarm at the boldness of the marginal notes, led Archbishop Parker, about 1563—though he had forwarded the re-publication of that version in England—to undertake the work of revision, by committing the several books of Scripture to individual scholars, or groups of scholars. Many of these (Sandys, Guest, Horne, Grindal, and others) were bishops, and when the book appeared, in 1568, it soon became known by the title which now attaches to it, of the Bishops' Bible. It was published, like most of the Bibles intended for use in church, in a stately folio. It has no dedication, but a portrait of Elizabeth appears on the engraved title-page, and others of Leicester and Burleigh appear, with strange, almost ludicrous, inappropriateness, before the Book of Joshua and the Psalms. It does not appear to have distinctly received the queen's sanction, but a vote of Convocation ordered copies to be bought by every archbishop and bishop, and placed in his hall or dining-room, for the convenience of strangers, by all cathedrals, and, as far as possible, for all churches. Fresh issues, more or less revised, appeared in 1572 and 1578. The Bishops' Bible is memorable, as to a certain extent fulfilling Coverdale's intention, which had been adjourned *sine die* by the successive editors of the Great Bible, and, for the first and last time, there was thus a quasi-authorised commentary on the whole Bible. It aimed, too, more than most previous versions, at reproducing the exact spelling of Hebrew names, as, *e.g.*, in giving Izhak for Isaac, and affixing the final *u* to names like Hezekiahu, Josiahu, and the like. It classified the books both of the Old and New Testament as legal, historical, sapiential, and prophetic. Passages were marked to be omitted when the chapters were read as the lessons for the day. In the edition of 1572 there was, for the first time, a map of Palestine, with degrees of latitude and longitude; and elaborate genealogical tables were prefixed to it. The judgment of most scholars is unfavourable to this version in the Old Testament, but the New shows considerable scholarship, carrying on its work of revision at each successive issue.

(7) The Rhemish Version of the New Testament, followed by the Douay Version of the Old, was intended partly to refute the charge that the Church of Rome was opposed altogether to the work of translation; partly to show that she had scholars who were not afraid to challenge comparison with those of the Reformed Churches. It appeared at Rheims in 1582, and had copious notes, mostly of a controversial character. It was just such a version as Gardiner would have welcomed, based avowedly on the Vulgate as more authoritative than the Greek, and on the text of the Vulgate that had been stamped by Clement VIII. with Papal sanction, retaining, as far as possible, all technical and theological terms, such as *depositum* (1 Tim. vi. 20), exinanited (Phil. ii. 7), penance, chalice, priest (for "elder"), host (for "sacrifice"), advent (for "coming"), co-inquination (2 Pet. ii. 13), peregrination (1 Pet. i. 17), prepuce, azymes, and the like. (See III., p. xi., for other examples.) In many cases, but naturally more in the Old Testament than the New, they were content to rest in a rendering which had simply no meaning at all. Two specimens may be sufficient to show to what extent stones were thus offered to English Catholics instead of bread.

> Eph. vi. 12. Our wrestling is . . . against princes and potentates, against the rectors of the world of this darkness, against the spirituals of wickedness in the celestials.
>
> Heb. xiii. 16. Beneficence and communication do not forget, for with such hosts God is premerited.

In not a few cases, however, the words of Latin use which were thus introduced had become current in the language of English religious writers, and a list of considerable length might be made of words which the revisers under James I. were not afraid to take from the Rhemish Testament in place of those which were found in the Bishops' Bible or the Geneva version. Among these we may note, "charity" for "love" in 1 Cor. xiii., "church" for "congregation" in Matt. xvi. 18, xviii. 17.

**V. The Authorised Version.** The position of the Church of England on the accession of James I., in 1603, in relation to the translations of Scripture then current, presented two conflicting currents of feeling. On the one hand, the Bishops' Bible occupied the position of authority. On the other, that of Geneva had gained a stronger hold on the affections of the English people,* and to a large extent, of the English clergy also. The Puritan party wished to dislodge the Bishops' Bible from its pre-eminence, and to make way for one more after the pattern of Geneva. The king and the court divines disliked the bolder tone of many of the notes of the latter version. Some few, perhaps, of the school afterwards developed by Laud and Montagu on the one side, by Falkland and Chillingworth on the other, fretted under the yoke of the Calvinistic dogmatism which pervaded both. Accordingly, when the Puritan petition, known, from the supposed number of signatures, as "millenary," led to the Hampton Court Conference, the campaign was opened by Dr. Reynolds, President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, who, urging some special faults in the Bishops' Bible (the passages selected, Gal. iv. 25, Pss. cv. 28, cvi. 30, were, it must be said, singularly unimportant) pleaded for a new revision. Bancroft, Bishop of London, made the somewhat peevish answer, "that if every man's humour were to be followed, there would be no end of translating." The king, however, interposed. He saw in the task of revision just the kind of work which met his tastes as a scholar. He saw in it also an opportunity for getting rid of the obnoxious Geneva Commentary. It was settled then and there, Bancroft withdrawing his opposition on this concession, that the forthcoming version should be issued without note or comment. Fifty-four scholars were selected (only forty-seven, however, are named), probably by the bishops who had most influence with the king, and arranged in six groups, to each of which a given portion of the Bible was assigned. Comparatively few of the names on this list have now any special interest for the general English reader. Of those who are still remembered, we may name Andrewes, afterwards Bishop of Winchester; Abbot, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury; Overall, the author of the latter part of the Church Catechism; Saravia, the friend of Hooker; Sir Henry Savile, famous as the editor of Chrysostom; Reynolds, who had, as we have seen, been the first to urge revision. The king recommended the translators to the patronage of the bishops, and invited cathedrals to contribute to the expenses of the work. As far as can be traced, the labour was, from first to last, like that of the present revisers of the Authorised version, a labour of love, without payment, or hope of payment, beyond the occasional hospitality of this or that college, which might, perhaps, offer free quarters to a company that included one of its own members. After nearly three years of labour the new Bible appeared in 1611. It bore, as our Bibles still bear, on its title-page, the claim to be "newly translated out of the original tongue; and with the former translations diligently compared and revised," and to be "appointed to be read in churches." The latter announcement, confirmed as it has been by general acceptance, has led to the title of the "Authorised version," which has since commonly attached to it. Singularly enough, however, there is nothing, as has been said above, but the printer's title-page as the warrant for this assumption of authority. A fresh revision was talked of under the Long Parliament in 1653, and a committee of scholars appointed in 1656. They met at the house of Lord Keeper Whitelock, and the list included the names of Walton, the editor of the great Polyglot Bible, and Cudworth, the famous metaphysician, but nothing came of the Conference.

The principles on which the translators were to act were definitely laid down for them in fifteen rules, probably drawn up under Bancroft's direction: (1) The Bishops' Bible was to be taken as a basis, and altered as little as possible. (2) Names of prophets and others were to be retained in their common form. This was directed against the plan which had been adopted in the Bishops' Bible. (3) The old ecclesiastical words were to be kept. "Church" was to be used instead of "congregation." This was against Tyndale and the versions that had followed him, with special reference to the Genevan. (4) Weight was to be given, where a word had different senses, to the authority of the ancient Fathers. (5) The received division of chapters was to be altered not at all, or as little as might be. (6) There were to be no marginal notes, except such as were purely verbal, alternative renderings, and the like. (7) Marginal references should be given at discretion. The next six rules prescribed the details of the work: the revision by one company of the work of another, and the like. The 14th pointed to Tyndale's translation, Matthew's, Coverdale's, Whitchurch's (the Great Bible), and the Geneva version, as to be followed where it was thought desirable.

In their preface, written by Dr. Miles Smith—a far more interesting document than the dedication which we find in all our Bibles—some further rules of action are stated as having guided them. They contrast their careful work, extending through three years or more, with the seventy-two days of the legend of the Septuagint. They speak respectfully of previous English versions. They profess to have consulted both ancient and modern translations: Chaldee, Hebrew, Syrian, Greek, Latin, Spanish, French (probably the Geneva version), Italian (probably Diodati's), Dutch (certainly Luther's). They defend their practice of varying the renderings of Hebrew or Greek words, partly on the legitimate ground that one English word will not always express the different meanings of the same word in the original, partly on the somewhat fantastic plea of fairness, that as many English words as possible might have the honour of being admitted to the sacred volume. A careful comparison shows that in the New Testament their chief standards of comparison were Beza's, the German, and even the Rhemish version, from the last of which, as stated above, they adopted many words and phrases,* and with which the direction to retain the old ecclesiastical terms at times brought them into close agreement. The general acceptance which the Authorised version met with, both from scholars and the great mass of readers, may fairly be admitted as evidence that the work was done carefully and well. The revisers were never satisfied, as those of Rheims or Douay sometimes were, with an absolutely unmeaning translation. They avoided archaisms to the best of their power, and with equal care avoided the "ink-horn terms" of a pedantic scholarship. They followed the earlier English versions in the majestic simplicity which, as a rule, had characterised them from Tyndale onwards, and aimed, not unsuccessfully, at greater accuracy. Where they failed, it was chiefly through the circumstances under which they worked. In one respect, their deliberate choice of a wrong method, in seeking to vary the renderings of Greek or Hebrew words as much, instead of as little, as possible, has involved them in many mistakes, leading to a false emphasis or a false antithesis, hindering the English reader from seeing how one passage throws light upon another, and making the use of an English concordance of little or no value as a help to interpretation. For other defects they were, perhaps, less responsible. The text of the New Testament was as yet in an unsettled state, and Stephens's (or Etienne's) edition, which they took as their standard, was based on the later, not the earlier MSS. They had learnt Greek through Latin, and were thus led (1) through the comparative incompleteness of the Latin conjugation, to confound tenses of the Greek verbs, imperfect, aorist, perfect, pluperfect, which were really distinct; (2) through the absence of a Latin definite article, to pass over the force of the Greek article, or to exaggerate it into a demonstrative pronoun; (3) through the imperfect analysis of the use of the Greek prepositions to give not unfrequently a sense, when the preposition is used with one case, which rightly belongs to it only when it is used with another. (4) The two centuries and a half which have passed since have naturally rendered some words obsolete or obsolescent, have lowered or altered the meanings of others, and have enlarged the range of the English vocabulary so as to take in words which would be as legitimately at the disposal of the revisers now as any, which were then in use, were at the command of the revisers of 1611. Mr. Aldis Wright's *Bible Word-Book*, and the papers by Canon Venables in the *Bible Educator*, on "Bible Words," may be consulted as authorities on the subjects of which they treat.

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* Of the Bishops' Bible there were thirteen editions in folio, six in quarto, and only one in octavo. Of the Geneva version, 1568 and 1611, there were sixteen in octavo, fifty-two in quarto, eighteen in folio.—Westcott, *History of the English Bible*, p. 140.

* See Westcott's *History*, p. 352.

A few of the minor, but not unimportant, details of the Authorised version still remain to be noticed. (1) The two editions printed in 1611 were both in the Old English black letter. Roman type was used in the reprint of 1612. (2) All the editions contained the Apocrypha till 1629. (3) Printers, or the editors employed by printers, have from time to time modified, though without authority, the spelling of the edition of 1611, so as to keep pace with the real or supposed improvements of later usage. (4) The careful use of italics to indicate the use of words which, though not expressed in the original, were yet essential to the meaning, was, from the outset, a special characteristic of the Authorised version. This, too, has, from time to time, been modified by successive editors. The text printed in the present volume represents, in this respect, that of 1611, but the Cambridge edition of 1638 is said, in this respect, to be more carefully edited. (5) The marginal readings and references of the edition of 1611 have in like manner been largely added to or varied by subsequent editors, notably by Dr. Paris in the Cambridge edition of 1762, and Dr. Blayney, who superintended the Oxford edition of 1769. Useful as these are as suggesting possible alternative translations or the comparison of really parallel passages, they cannot be regarded as having the slightest claim to authority, properly so called. Some few corrections of the version itself were also made by these or other editors, on their own responsibility, as, *e.g.*, "about" for "above" in 2 Cor. xii. 12, "unto me" for "under me" in Ps. xviii. 47. Mistakes in printing have made some editions memorable—"vinegar" for "vineyard" in Matt. xxi. 28; "not" omitted from the Seventh Commandment, in 1632; "righteousness" for "unrighteousness" (Rom. vi. 13), in 1653. (6) The marginal dates of the common English Bibles, which first appear in Bishop Lloyd's Bible in 1701, are also, it should be noted, though often helpful, altogether without authority. They represent, as now printed, the chronology adopted by Archbishop Ussher, and are, like all such systems, open to correction, as research brings to light fuller or more authentic materials, or criticism corrects the conclusions of earlier scholars. In some cases, as, *e.g.*, in assigning A.D. 60 to the Epistle of St. James, A.D. 96 to the Revelation of St. John, A.D. 58 to the Epistle to the Galatians, the dates assigned assume theories which many recent scholars have rejected. (7) The chapter-headings of our printed Bibles have remained with but little alteration, but they, too, will call for a careful revision. That the right of revision has been exercised, however, appears from the changes that have taken place in the heading of Ps. cxlix. from the form which it presented in 1611, "The Psalmist exhorteth to praise God . . . for that power which He hath given to the Church to bind the consciences of men," to its present text, which omits the last six words. In many instances the headings assume, somewhat too decisively, the character of a commentary, rather than a summary. Thus, while Pss. xvi., xxii., and lxix. are dealt with in their primary historical aspect, Pss. ii., xlv., xlvii., lxxii., and cx. are referred explicitly to "Christ's kingdom." "The Church" appears as the subject of Pss. lxxvi., lxxx., and lxxxvii., where it would have been historically truer to say *Israel*. Ps. cix. is referred to Judas as the object of its imprecations. The Song of Solomon receives throughout an elaborate allegorical interpretation. Isa. liii. is referred specifically to "the scandal of the Cross," Isa. lxi. to "the office of Christ," Mic. v. to "the birth and kingdom of Christ," and so on. Luke vii. assumes the identity of the "woman that was a sinner" with Mary Magdalene. In Acts vi. the Apostles are said to "appoint the office of deaconship to seven chosen men." In Acts xx. Paul is said to "celebrate the Lord's Supper." Apart altogether from the question whether the interpretation in these and other like cases is or is not correct, it is clear that the headings go beyond the function which properly belongs to them, and trench upon the work of the commentator, which the revisers of 1611 deliberately renounced. That there was an element of loss in that renunciation has been already stated, but we may well believe that on the whole it has been well that we have the Bible in its completeness, without the addition of any comments reflecting the passing ecclesiastical or Calvinistic dogmatism characteristic of the early part of the seventeenth century, which would in all probability have been clothed, sooner or later, by popular and clerical feeling, with a fictitious authority, or even been invested by legal decisions, or Acts of Parliament, with a real one. It is well, in the long-run, that every commentary on the whole or any part of Scripture should be submitted freely to the right and the duty of private judgment.

## IV.—THE ORIGIN OF THE FIRST THREE GOSPELS.

I. It is, of course, an important question whether we have in the four Gospels received by the Church as canonical, the evidence of contemporary writers—two of them claiming to be eye-witnesses—or writings of a generation, or two generations, later, the after-growth of the second century, fathered upon authors whose names belonged to the first. The question when the Gospels were written is, it may be admitted, one which cannot be answered precisely within a decade or so of years; nor would it be right to overstate the argument by asserting that we have any evidence external to the New Testament of the existence of the Gospels in their present form earlier than Papias (*ob.* A.D. 170), who names St. Matthew and St. Mark, and Irenæus (A.D. 130—200) and Tertullian (A.D. 160—240), who name all four. The existence in A.D. 170 of a harmonised narrative of the Gospel history by Tatian, known as the *Diatessaron* (*i.e.*, the Gospel as stated by the Four), and the mention of St. Luke in the MS. in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, known from the name of its first editor as the Muratorian Fragment (A.D. 150—190?), point to the conclusion that four Gospels bearing the same names as those now received, and presumably, till proof is given of the contrary, identical with them, were recognised and read publicly as authoritative documents in the middle of the second century. And, obviously, they occupied at that time a position of acknowledged superiority to all other like documents. Men invent reasons, more or less fantastic, such as those which Irenæus gives (*Contr. Hœres.* iii. 11)—the analogy of the four elements, or the four winds—why there should be neither more nor less than four. It is scarcely too much to say that this reputation could hardly have been gained in less than half a century from the time when they first came to be generally known; and so we are led to the conclusion that they must have been in existence at a date not later than A.D. 100—120.

II. An examination of the earliest Christian writings outside the canon of the New Testament is to some extent disappointing. There are very few references to the Gospel narratives in the Epistles that bear the name of Clement or Ignatius or Barnabas. They assume the broad outlines of the Gospel history, the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus as the Christ. They contain echoes and fragmentary citations from the Sermon on the Mount, and other portions of our Lord's ethical teaching which had most impressed themselves on the mind and conscience of His disciples; but it must be admitted that we could not infer from them that the writers had in their hands the Gospels as we have them. We may go further, and say that it is antecedently probable that their knowledge was more or less traditional, and that the general acceptance of the Gospels, and therefore, so far as their writings are concerned, even the existence of the Gospels, may have been of later date. On the other hand, it must be remembered that these letters are, in the strictest sense of the word, occasional, and not systematic. They are directed, each of them, to a special purpose, under circumstances that did not naturally lead the writers to speak of the facts of the Gospel record—even of those of which, on any assumption, they must have had, at least, a traditional knowledge.

III. When we come to the writings of Justin Martyr (A.D. 103—167), the case is altered. He, as having passed into the Church of Christ from the schools of philosophy, was a man of wider culture than any Christian writer since St. Paul. The circumstances of his life led him into controversy with Jews who questioned the claim of Jesus to be the Christ, and in his argument with them, his references to the acts and words of Christ are numerous and often of great length. It is true that he does not cite any Gospel by name, but mentions them generally as "the memoirs" or "records" that are "known as Gospels," and are read in the weekly meetings of the churches (*Apol.* i. 66), and that where he quotes from these "memoirs" it is at times with such considerable variations of detail as regards their facts, and of expression as regards their teaching, that it has been urged by some writers—notably by the unknown author of "Supernatural Religion"—that he probably had in his hands some book other than any of the four which we now acknowledge. Against this it may be pleaded, however, that the habits of the age, and the special circumstances of Christian writers, were unfavourable to accurate quotation. The Jewish Scriptures, in their Greek form, were collected into a volume, and could be bought at Alexandria, or perhaps in any great city, without difficulty; but such Apostolical writings as those of which Justin speaks were scarcely likely to be multiplied by either the Jewish or heathen scribes who supplied the stalls or shops of booksellers; nor is it probable that the Christian Church was at that time sufficiently organised to command booksellers of its own. A treasured copy, in the hands of the bishop or elder of each Christian community, read publicly at its meetings, was, we may well believe, in that early stage of the growth of the new society, enough to meet its wants. The members of that society listened, and remembered and reproduced what they had heard with the variations which, under such conditions, were inevitable. And even if we were to admit, hypothetically, the conclusion which has thus been drawn, the result would, after all, be neither more nor less than this—that there was in Justin's time a fifth Gospel in existence, agreeing in all material points with the four, or, at least, with three out of the four. To most men it would seem improbable that such a Gospel should have left no traces of its existence outside the quotations or references from which that existence has been thus inferred, that it should have supplied the most scholarly of the early Christian writers with all his knowledge of the life and teaching of the Christ, and then have vanished like a meteor. But if it did exist, then it would simply follow that we have, in the unknown Gospel supposed to be quoted by Justin, a fifth independent witness confirming, at least in substance, the records of the other four.

IV. There are, however, writings which even the most sceptical critics allow to be earlier than the Epistles of Clement and Ignatius. The Epistles of the New Testament are—excluding for the present the so-called *Antilegomena* (2 Pet. ii. and iii., John, Jude)—documents of an antiquity that may well be called primitive. They did not come together into a volume till perhaps the middle of the second century, or later. The letters of each writer may be cited accordingly, as giving a perfectly independent testimony. Let us ask, therefore, what evidence they supply as to the existence, either of the first three Gospels, or of a common narrative, written or oral, which they embody, each with variations of its own. For the present we limit the inquiry to these three. The fourth Gospel stands apart from them in a distinct position of its own, and the evidence in favour of its having come from the Apostle whose name it bears will be found in the *Introduction* to it.

Take, then, (1) the EPISTLE OF ST. JAMES. Its contents point to its being, perhaps, the very earliest document in the New Testament. The absence of any reference to the controversy between the Judaisers and the followers of St. Paul, leads naturally to the conclusion that it was written before that controversy—prior, *i.e.*, to the Council of Jerusalem of Acts xv. There is absolutely no ground for thinking, as men have thought, that he writes either against St. Paul's doctrine, that a man is justified by faith, or against the perversion of that doctrine by St. Paul's followers. The dead faith which he condemns is not a faith in Christ, as having atoned for sin, but the mere confession of the primary article of Jewish monotheism—"Thou believest that there is one God" (Jas. ii. 19). Taking the EPISTLE OF ST. JAMES, therefore, as the earliest witness, what do we find there? Not, we must freely admit, any reference to the Gospel narrative; but, on the other hand, a mind whose thoughts and mode of teaching had been manifestly formed on the model of the Sermon on the Mount. He, too, teaches by beatitudes (Jas. i. 12; Matt. v. 10, 11), and the one beatitude is an echo of the other. To him, also, God is emphatically the giver of all good things (Jas. i. 17; Matt. vii. 11). He, too, dwells on the danger of hearing without doing (Jas. i. 22; Matt. vii. 24). To him the grass withering before the scorching sun and the hot wind of the desert, is the type of all that is most fleeting in fortune or in character (Jas. i. 11; Matt. vi. 30; xiii. 6). He, too, connects the name of our Lord Jesus Christ with that freedom from "respect of persons," which even the scribes acknowledged to be a leading feature in His character, and which, therefore, He would condemn in those who professed to be His disciples (Jas. ii. 1; Matt. xxii. 16). He shares his Master's implied condemnation of the "gorgeous raiment" of those whom the world honours (Jas. ii. 2; Matt. xi. 8). To him, as to Christ, to keep the law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," is the condition of entering into life (Jas. ii. 8; Matt. xix. 19; xxii. 40), and that law, as having been thus confirmed by the great King, is for him the royal, the kingly law. He re-states the law that the merciful, and they alone, will obtain mercy (Jas. ii. 13; Matt. v. 7; vii. 1). He warns men against the risks of claiming without authority the function of teachers, and forgetting that we all need the guidance of the one divine Teacher (Jas. iii. 1; Matt. xxiii. 8). The same familiar illustration of the tree and its fruits is used by him to set forth the relation of character and acts (Jas. iii. 12; Matt. vii. 16). To clothe the naked and to feed the hungry are with him, as with the Christ, elements of the perfect life (Jas. ii. 15; Matt. xxv. 35, 36). He has the same word of stern reproof for the "adulterous generation" in which he lived (Jas. iv. 4; Matt. xii. 39), and which he reminds of the truth that they cannot be the friends at once of God and of the world (Jas. iv. 4; Matt. vi. 24). He knows that humility is the condition of true exaltation (Jas. iv. 10; Matt. xxiii. 12). He, too, speaks of the Father as One who, though willing to save, is able also to destroy (Jas. iv. 12; Matt. x. 28), and protests, in words that are almost an echo of our Lord's, against the far-reaching schemes of man's covetousness (Jas. iv. 13—16; Luke xii. 16—20). To him the coming of the Lord is the goal to which all things tend (Jas. v. 8; Matt. xxiv. 27). It is nigh, even at the doors (Jas. v. 9; Matt. xxiv. 33). He condemns, as his Lord had done, the rash use of oaths, and tells men, in the very words used by Christ, that their speech should be Yea, yea, and Nay, nay (Jas. v. 12; Matt. v. 34—36). He prescribes anointing with oil as a means of healing the sick, even as our Lord had done (Jas. v. 14; Mark vi. 13). With him, as in our Lord's miracles, the healing of the sick is associated with the forgiveness of their sins (Jas. v. 15; Matt. ix. 2). It will hardly be contended that so continuous a series of parallelisms between the Epistle of St. James and the Gospel of St. Matthew is purely accidental. But if it is not so, if there is evidence of a connection of some kind between them, then we have to choose between the hypotheses (1) of both drawing from the common source of the current traditional knowledge of our Lord's teaching; or (2) of the Evangelist incorporating into his report of that teaching what he had learnt from St. James; or (3) of St. James being a reader of a book containing the whole, or part, of what we now find in St. Matthew's Gospel. (See *Introduction to St. Matthew.*)

I turn to the FIRST EPISTLE OF ST. PETER. The opening words attach to the "blood of Christ" the same importance which He Himself had attached to it (1 Pet. i. 2; Mark xiv. 24). He takes up the words in which his Lord had bidden men watch with their loins girded (1 Pet. i. 13; Luke xii. 35). He points the contrast between seeing and believing, even as Christ had pointed it (1 Pet. i. 8; John xx. 19). He has learnt to interpret the prophets as his Lord had taught him, as foretelling the sufferings that were appointed unto Christ (1 Pet. i. 2; Luke xxiv. 44, 45). He sees in the blood of Christ a ransom for many (1 Pet. i. 18; Mark x. 45), and knows that God has raised Him from the dead (1 Pet. i. 3). He teaches that there must be a new birth wrought in men by the divine word (1 Pet. ii. 23; John iii. 3, 5). He sees in Christ the stone which the builders rejected (1 Pet. ii. 4, 7; Mark xii. 10), in the crisis through which Israel was passing, the time of its "visitation" (1 Pet. ii. 12; Luke xx. 44). He remembers, using the self-same unusual word which occurs in almost immediate sequence in the Gospel record, how the calm recognition of the claims of civil rulers had "put to silence" (literally, *muzzled*) the ignorance of foolish men, and can therefore call on men to follow their Lord's example for His sake (1 Pet. ii. 15; Matt. xxii. 21, 34). He remembers also the marvellous silence of his Master at His trial before the Sanhedrin, and the livid scars left by the scourges of the soldiers (1 Pet. ii. 23, 24; Mark xiv. 60, 61; xv. 15). Slaves were to recollect, when they were buffeted, that they were suffering as Christ had suffered (1 Pet. ii. 20; Mark xiv. 65). It was by that suffering that the Good Shepherd, laying down His life for the sheep (John x. 11), had drawn to Him the sheep that had gone astray over whom He had yearned with an infinite compassion (1 Pet. ii. 25; Matt. ix. 36). He has learnt the lesson of not returning evil for evil (1 Pet. iii. 9; Matt. v. 39). He knows the beatitude that had been pronounced on those who suffer for righteousness' sake (1 Pet. iii. 14; Matt. v. 10). He knows, too, that Jesus Christ, having preached to the "spirits in prison" (there is, at least, a possible connection here with Matt. xxvii. 52, 53), went into heaven, and is at the right hand of God (1 Pet. iii. 22; Mark xvi. 19). As if remembering the sin into which he fell because he had not watched unto prayer, he urges others to watch (1 Pet. iv. 7; Mark xiv. 37). He had learnt, by a living personal experience, how man's love, meeting God's, covers the multitude of sins (1 Pet. iv. 8; John xxi. 15—17). Revilings do but bring to his memory yet another beatitude which he had heard from his Lord's lips (1 Pet. iv. 14; Matt. v. 10). He reminds men how his Lord had commended His spirit to the Father (1 Pet. iv. 19; Luke xxiii. 46). He writes, as being himself a witness of the sufferings of Christ (1 Pet. v. 1). He has learnt to see in Him the chief Shepherd, under whom he himself and all other pastors are called to serve (1 Pet. v. 4; John x. 14). His call to others to be "sober and watchful," because their adversary, the devil, was "like a roaring lion, seeking whom he might devour," speaks of the experience of one who had been told that Satan desired to have him that he might "sift him as wheat" (1 Pet. v. 8; Luke xxii. 31).

The doubts which have from time to time been raised as to the Second Epistle of St. Peter, prevent my laying much stress on the evidence which it supplies in this matter. My own belief is that the scale turns in favour of its genuineness. In any case, it is as early as any document later than the New Testament writings. Looking to it, then, we note the recognition of the distinction between calling and election, which Peter had himself specially been taught (2 Pet. i. 10; Matt. xx. 16). The writer remembers how the Lord Jesus had shown him that the putting off of his "tabernacle" should be quick and sudden (2 Pet. i. 14; John xxi. 18). He uses of his own "decease" the self-same word which had been used of that of Christ (2 Pet. i. 15; Luke ix. 31). The vision of the brightness of the Transfiguration, and the voice from the excellent glory, are still living in his memory (2 Pet. i. 17, 18; Mark viii. 2—7). In this, as in the former Epistle, he has been taught to see lessons connected with the coming of Christ, which did not lie on the surface, in the history of Noah and the Flood, to which our Lord had directed men's attention (1 Pet. iii. 20, 21; 2 Pet. iii. 5—7; Matt. xxiv. 37). Here also, then, we have documents, one of which, at least, is acknowledged as belonging, without the shadow of a doubt, to the Apostolic age, and which abound in allusive references to what we find recorded in the Gospels. In this case it is, of course, more than probable that the writer spoke from personal recollection, and that we may have here the testimony, not of one who had read the Gospels, but of one from whom the information which they embody had been in part, at least, derived. And, assuming the Second Epistle to be by him, we have there a direct intimation of his intention to provide that that information should be embodied for those for whom he wrote in some permanent form (2 Pet. i. 15). For the evidence which leads to the conclusion that the Second Gospel grew out of that intention, see *Introduction to St. Mark.*

V. We pass to the Epistle to the Hebrews, which, whether we assume, as seems to me most probable, the authorship of Apollos, or that of St. Paul, or one of his fellow-labourers, Barnabas, or Luke, or Clement, belongs also to the Apostolic age. The writer of that Epistle acknowledges the fact of the Ascension (Heb. i. 3; xii. 2). He distinguishes himself (Heb. ii. 3, 4), just as St. Luke does, from those who had actually heard the word of salvation from the lips of the Lord Himself, but he has heard from them of the Temptation and the Passion of the Christ (Heb. ii. 18), of His perfect sinlessness (Heb. iv. 15), of His tolerant sympathy for all forms of ignorance and error (Heb. v. 2), of the prayers and supplications, the strong crying and tears, of the garden and the cross (Heb. v. 7). The Messianic prophecy of Ps. cx., to which prominence had been given by our Lord's question in Matt. xxii. 42, becomes the centre of his argument. He knows, as one who had traced the descent from David, as given by St. Matthew and St. Luke, that our Lord had sprung out of Judah (Heb. vi. 14). The New Covenant, of which Christ had spoken as being ratified by his blood, fills the next great place in his argument (Heb. viii. 8—13; xiii. 24; Luke xxii. 20). He finds a mystical meaning in the fact that the scene of that blood-shedding was outside the gate of Jerusalem (Heb. xiii. 12; John xix. 20). To him, as to St. Peter, the name of Jesus, on which he most loves to dwell, is that He is, as He described Himself, the Great Shepherd of the sheep (Heb. xiii. 20; John x. 14).

VI. We pass, as next in order, to the Epistles of St. Paul, taking them, as is obviously more natural in such an inquiry, in their chronological sequence. It is not without significance that the earliest of these, the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, opens with a reference to a Gospel of which St. Paul speaks as his (1 Thess. i. 5; ii. 2). It is, of course, true that he uses that word in its wider sense, not as a book, but as a message of glad tidings; but then that message consisted, not in a speculative doctrine, but in the record of what the Lord Jesus had done, and suffered, and taught, and how He had been raised from the dead (1 Cor. xi. 23; xv. 1, 3), and so the facts of the case suggest the conclusion that the name was given at a later stage—later, but how soon we cannot say—to the book, because the book so called embodied the substance of what had previously been taught orally. He knows that those whose faith in God exposes them to persecution are, in this respect, followers of the Lord, reproducing the pattern of His sufferings (1 Thess. i. 6). He warns men of a "wrath to come," such as the Baptist had proclaimed (1 Thess. i. 10; Luke iii. 7), and assumes the Resurrection, the Ascension, the Second Coming from Heaven (1 Thess. i. 10; iii. 13), as ideas already familiar. The key-note of his preaching, as of that of the gospel, is that men have been called to a kingdom of which Christ is the Head (1 Thess. ii. 12; Luke iv. 43). In words which reproduce the very accents of our Lord's teaching, he tells men that "the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (1 Thess. v. 2; Luke xii. 39). For him also the times of trouble that are to precede that coming are as the travail-pangs of the world's new birth (1 Thess. v. 3; Matt. xxiv. 8). The echoes of the voice that calls men, not to sleep, but to "watch and be sober," are ringing in his ears, as they had done in those of St. Peter (1 Thess. v. 6; Luke xxi. 34—36). In the Second Epistle the coming of the Son of Man is painted more fully, as Christ Himself had painted it. He is to come with "the sound of a trumpet, and with angels of His might" (2 Thess. i. 7; Matt. xxiv. 31; xxv. 31; Luke xxi. 27), and the sentence which He will then pass on the impenitent is characterised as "eternal" (2 Thess. i. 9; Matt. xxv. 46). He, too, has learnt, though as with a fresh revelation of details, that the day of the Lord is not, as men dreamt, at hand, that the end is not "by and by" (2 Thess. ii. 2; Luke xxi. 9). He appeals to a body of traditions—*i.e.*, of oral teaching, which certainly included portions of the Gospel history and of the teaching of Christ (2 Thess. ii. 15; 1 Cor. xi. 23; xv. 1, 2).

The Epistles to the Church of Corinth present the same general features as to the Coming of Christ, the revelation of Jesus Christ from Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Judgment (1 Cor. xv. 20—28). Their greater fulness naturally presents more points of contact with the Gospel history on which they rest. We meet with the names of Cephas (which we find in that form in John i. 43, and not elsewhere in the Gospels) and of the brethren of the Lord as familiar to that Church (1 Cor. i. 10; iii. 22; ix. 5). The command which Christ had given to His disciples to baptise all nations is known and acted on (1 Cor. i. 14). The story of the Cross is the theme of the Apostle's preaching (1 Cor. i. 18). Christ is to him the impersonation of the Divine Wisdom (1 Cor. i. 30; Luke ii. 40, 52; xi. 49). He employs the imagery, which Christ had employed, of the Wise Builder who erects his fabric on a firm foundation (1 Cor. iii. 10; Luke vi. 48). He knows the lessons taught by the parable of the Steward (1 Cor. iv. 2; Luke xii. 42), and by that of the Unprofitable Servant (1 Cor. iv. 7; Luke xvii. 10). The rule of the Sermon on the Mount for those who suffer persecution is his rule also (1 Cor. iv. 12, 13; Luke vi. 27, 28). He illustrates the spread of spiritual influence for good or evil by the same image that gives its distinctive character to the parable of the Leaven (1 Cor. v. 5; Gal. v. 9; Luke xiii. 20), and connects this with the sacrifice of Christ as the true Passover, on the day of that Feast (1 Cor. v. 7; Luke xxii. 15). He has received the thought that the saints shall judge the world (1 Cor. vi. 2; Matt. xix. 28), and on that ground urges men to submit now to injustice (1 Cor. vi. 6, 7; Luke vi. 29, 30). His thoughts of the holiness of marriage rest on the same grounds as those of Jesus (1 Cor. vi. 16; Matt. xix. 5, 6); and he, too, has learnt to see in man's body a temple of the Eternal Spirit (1 Cor. vi. 20; John ii. 21). Outward freedom and slavery are looked on by him as nothing compared with the true freedom of the spirit (1 Cor. vii. 22, 23; John viii. 36). He regards the life of the unmarried, when the choice is made for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake, as higher than that of the married (1 Cor. vii. 32; Matt. xix. 12). The special danger of over-anxiety about earthly things is to him known by the same word that our Lord had used (1 Cor. vii. 32—34; Luke x. 19). The very adverb which he employs to express freedom from it, is taken from St. Luke's account of Martha as "cumbered" about much serving (1 Cor. vii. 35; Luke x. 40). He too echoes, in view of the troubles that were coming on the earth, the beatitude pronounced on the wombs that never bare (1 Cor. vii. 40; Luke xxiii. 29). With him, also, it is not that which goes into the mouth that affects our acceptance with God (1 Cor. viii. 8; Mark vii. 18); and that which he seeks to avoid in eating or drinking is the offending others (1 Cor. viii. 13; Luke xvii. 1). His thoughts of the name, the function, the rights of an Apostle, are based upon our Lord's commission given to the Twelve and to the Seventy (1 Cor. ix. 4—14; Luke ix. 3; x. 7). He refers the last to the express commandment of Christ (1 Cor. ix. 14; Luke x. 7), and yet rises beyond those rights to the higher law of giving without receiving (1 Cor. ix. 18; Matt. x. 8). He uses the same unusual word for persistent "wearying" that St. Luke had used (1 Cor. ix. 27; Luke xviii. 5). The narrative of the Last Supper, with all the symbolic significance of its words and acts, with all the associations of the events that came before and after it, is assumed as part of the elementary knowledge of every Christian (1 Cor. x. 16, 17; xi. 23—26; Luke xxii. 19—23). His account of the appearances of our Lord after His resurrection, though manifestly independent, includes some of those recorded in the Gospels (1 Cor. xv. 3—7; Luke xxiv. 34—36); and his teaching as to the "spiritual body" of the Resurrection agrees with the phenomena which they report (1 Cor. xv. 42—44; Luke xxiv. 36; John xx. 19). His Master's law of veracity in speech is his law also (2 Cor. i. 18; Matt. v. 37), as it had been that of St. James. Our Lord's formula of asseveration, Hebrew as it was, is his formula (2 Cor. i. 20; Luke iv. 24, *et al.*). His thoughts of his mission as a minister of the New Covenant are based on our Lord's words (2 Cor. iii. 6; Luke xxii. 20). The words in which he speaks of the believer as "transfigured" from glory to glory, are manifestly an allusive reference to the history of Christ's transfiguration (2 Cor. iii. 18; Matt. xvii. 2). He looks forward to the manifestation of all secrets before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. v. 10; Rom. xiv. 10; Matt. xxv. 31), and, almost as in Christ's own language, he states the purpose of His death (2 Cor. v. 15; Gal. i. 4; Mark x. 45). He thinks of Him as being made sin for us—*i.e.*, as being numbered with the transgressors (2 Cor. v. 21; Mark xv. 28), and dwells on the outward poverty of His life (2 Cor. viii. 9; Luke ix. 58), and its inward meekness and gentleness (2 Cor. x. 1; Matt. xi. 29).

We turn to the EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS. There the Apostle's knowledge of the higher truths of the gospel has come to him, as it came to Peter, not by flesh and blood, but by a revelation from the Father (Gal. i. 12, 16; Matt. xvi. 17). References to external facts are, however, not wanting. The names of James, Cephas, and John are mentioned as already familiar to his Galatian converts (Gal. ii. 9). He echoes the very syllables of the prayer of Gethsemane (Gal. iv. 6; Rom. viii. 16; Mark xiv. 36). He mentions the birth of Christ ("made of a woman") in a way which at least suggests an acquaintance with St. Luke's account of the Incarnation (Gal. iv. 4; Luke i. 31). He sums up all duties of man to man in the self-same law which Christ had solemnly affirmed (Gal. v. 14; Rom. xiii. 9; Luke x. 27). His list of the works of the flesh reads like an echo of our Lord's list of "the things that defile a man" (Gal. v. 19—21; Mark vii. 21, 22).

In the EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS we have comparatively few of these references, but the great facts of the birth from the seed of David (Rom. i. 3), and the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ are assumed throughout (Rom. viii. 34; Eph. i. 20). The command to meet cursing with blessing is repeated (Rom. xii. 14; Luke vi. 28), as is also that of paying tribute to whom tribute is due (Rom. xiii. 7; Luke xx. 25). He has learnt the lesson that nothing that goes into the mouth can defile a man (Rom. xiv. 14; Mark vii. 18). In Rom. xvi. 25 he seems even to point to the existence of "prophetic writings," or "scriptures," as containing the substance of the gospel which he preached; and if we adopt the view that he refers here, not to the older prophets, but to contemporary writings (as St. Peter apparently does in the "prophetic word" of 2 Pet. i. 19), then we have a coincidence confirming St. Luke's statement that there were many such writings anterior to his Gospel (Luke i. 1), and explaining St. Paul's use of the term "scripture," as applied to a quotation from that Gospel (1 Tim. v. 8; Luke x. 7).

The EPISTLES OF THE FIRST IMPRISONMENT—*i.e.*, PHILIPPIANS, EPHESIANS, COLOSSIANS—speak of Christ as "the beloved" of the Father (Eph. i. 6; Luke ix. 35). "Apostles and prophets" are joined together, as Christ had joined them, and in close connection with the Wisdom of God as sending them (Eph. iii. 5, 10; iv. 11; Luke xi. 49). The parable of the Bridegroom and the Bride is recognised and developed (Eph. v. 25; Matt. xxii. 1; xxv. 1; Luke xiv. 16), and our Lord's citation from Gen. ii. 24 re-cited (Eph. v. 31; Mark x. 7). The writer knows that there is no respect of persons with the Lord Jesus (Eph. vi. 9; Col. iii. 25; Matt. xxii. 16). He takes up and expands the thought of the "whole armour," the "panoply" of God, which is mightier than the "panoply" of evil (Eph. vi. 13; Luke xi. 22). He sees that the true redemption or deliverance of men is found in the forgiveness of sins (Col. i. 14; Luke i. 77; iii. 3). He expresses the perfect law of the believer's life in saying that all personal or corporate acts should be done in the name of the Lord Jesus (Col. iii. 17; 1 Cor. v. 4; Matt. xviii. 20). That Name is above every name, because He who bore it, having been in the form of God, had emptied Himself of that glory, and had come to be in the likeness of man, and even in His manhood had humbled Himself still further, and become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil. ii. 6—9; Luke i. 32; ii. 51).

The PASTORAL EPISTLES—1 TIMOTHY, 2 TIMOTHY, TITUS—carry on the evidence. It is with him one of the faithful sayings, which are as the axioms of Christian doctrine, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim. i. 15; Luke v. 32), to give Himself as a ransom for all men (1 Tim. ii. 6; Matt. xx. 28). The earliest type of the Church's creed includes the Incarnation, the Visions of Angels, the Ascension, as they are recorded by St. Luke (1 Tim. iii. 16; Luke xxii. 43; xxiv. 4, 51; Acts i. 10). He lays down as the rule of discipline for the trial of offenders, that which, though previously acknowledged, had yet, in a specially solemn manner, been re-affirmed by Christ (1 Tim. v. 19; Matt. xviii. 16). He dwells on the good confession which Jesus Christ had witnessed before Pontius Pilate (1 Tim. vi. 13; Luke xxiii. 3). He speaks of the far-off judgment in Christ's own words, as simply "that day" (2 Tim. i. 18; Matt. vii. 22). He refers once more to his own gospel as witnessing both to the Resurrection of Christ and His descent from David (2 Tim. ii. 8). He states again, almost in the very words of Christ, the law of retribution according to which He will deny hereafter those who deny Him now, and will cause those who endure to be sharers in His kingdom (2 Tim. ii. 12; Luke ix. 26). Baptism is for him the washing of a new birth, and that by the working of the Spirit (Tit. iii. 5; John iii. 5). What has been said of the Second Epistle of St. Peter holds good of this last group of the Epistles that bear St. Paul's name. If they are not actually by him, they are yet unquestionably documents that carry us back to a period not later than the close of the First Century or the very beginning of the Second.

VII. The examples that have thus been collected are, it is believed, sufficient to show that the Epistles of the New Testament abound in references, not only to the great facts and doctrines of the Faith, but to the acts and teaching of Christ as recorded in the Gospels. And it must be remembered that there was nothing in the circumstances of the case to lead the writers to more than these incidental and allusive references. They were writing, not the Commentaries or the Sermons which belonged to a later age, but Epistles called for by special necessities, and not naturally suggesting, any more than analogous documents do now, a reference to the details of the Gospel history; and therefore the fact that the allusions are as numerous as they are, may fairly be accepted as a proof that their memories were saturated, as it were, with the acts and the words of the life of Jesus. These formed the basis of the oral instruction given to every convert (Luke i. 3). They were part of the traditions of every Church, of the gospel as preached by every Apostle and Evangelist. I do not say that they prove the existence of the first three Gospels as written books, but they prepare the way for all the special evidence—external and internal—which may be adduced on behalf of each of them, and show that they represent what was the current teaching of the Apostle's age. It is probable enough, looking to the literary activity of that time in all cities of the empire, that there were, as St. Luke says (chap. i. 1), and as Papias implies (see *Introduction to St. Matthew*), many writers who undertook the task of embodying these floating traditions in writing. If out of these only three have survived, it is a natural inference that they were recognised as the most accurate or the most authoritative.

VIII. And it is at least a presumption in favour of the Gospels with which we are now dealing that they are ascribed to persons whose names were not of themselves clothed with any very high authority. A later writer, compiling a Gospel for Jewish Christians, would hardly have been likely to select the publican Apostle, the object of scorn and hatred alike to his own countrymen and to the Gentiles, instead of St. Peter or St. Andrew; or the subordinate attendant on the Apostles, whose help St. Paul had rejected because he had shown himself wavering and faint-hearted (Acts xiii. 13; xv. 38); or the physician whose name just occurs incidentally in the salutations of three of St. Paul's later Epistles (Col. iv. 14; Philem. verse 24; 2 Tim. iv. 11). And yet, when we know the names, and track out the history of the men, we see that in each case they explain many of the phenomena of the books to which they are severally attached, and furnish many coincidences that are both interesting and evidential. In the case of one Gospel, that of St. Luke, there is besides this, as the Notes on it will show, so close an agreement between its vocabulary and that of St. Paul, that it is scarcely possible to come to any other conclusion than that the one writer was intimately acquainted with the other. It may be added that whether from the sceptical point of view, or that of those who accept the first three Gospels as a real record of our Lord's words, there is *primâ facie* evidence that they took their present form before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 72. The warnings of the great prediction of Matt. xxiii., Mark xiii., Luke xxi., as to "the abomination of desolation," and "Jerusalem compassed with armies," the counsel that men should "flee to the mountains" regardless of what they left behind them, the expectation suggested in them of the coming of the Son of Man immediately after the tribulation of those days, all indicate, on either hypothesis, a time of anxious and eager watching—a looking-for of those things that were coming on the earth, which exactly corresponds with the period between the persecution under Nero and the invasion of Titus, and does not correspond to any period either before or after. There had not been time when the Gospels were written for men to feel the doubt and disappointment which showed themselves in the question, "Where then is the promise of His coming?" (2 Pet. iii. 4).

IX. The book known as the Acts of the Apostles is so manifestly the sequel to the Gospel of St. Luke that it can hardly be put in evidence as an independent witness. On the other hand, it contains elements of evidence, reports of speeches, and the like, that are independent. It shows (Acts xx. 35) that in the churches of Asia Minor, in the very region in which Papias afterwards wrote on the "sayings" or "oracles" of the Christ, the "words of the Lord Jesus" were recognised as at once familiar and authoritative, and that among those words were some that are not found in any of the extant Gospels. A series of coincidences, obviously undesigned, with the Epistles of St. Paul, in regard to facts, as seen, *e.g.*, in Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, and yet more in respect of style and phraseology, as above stated, makes it all but certain that the two writers were contemporary. The fact that the last incident recorded in the Acts is St. Paul's arrival at Rome, makes it, *primâ facie*, probable that the book was written shortly after the expiration of the two years of his sojourn there, with the mention of which the book concludes—*i.e.*, about A.D. 65. But if so, then the Gospel to which it is a sequel could not well have been later, and thus the former conclusion gains an additional confirmation.

X. The elements of agreement and of difference in the first three Gospels fall in, it is obvious, with the view thus given of their origin and history. It is scarcely probable, though we are not justified in assuming it to be impossible, that any notes of our Lord's discourses or parables, or shorter sayings, were taken at the time, or that records of His miracles were then and there reduced to writing. But in the East, as elsewhere, the memory of men is often active and retentive in proportion to the absence of written aid. Men recite long poems or discourses which they have learnt orally, or get into the way of repeating long narratives with comparatively slight variations. And so, when the Church was enlarged, first in Palestine and afterwards at Antioch and the other churches of the Gentiles, new converts would be instructed freely in the words and acts of the Master from whom they took the name of Christians. As the church spread beyond the limits of Judæa, as it came to include converts of a higher culture, as it spread to countries where those who had been eye-witnesses were few and far between, there would naturally be a demand for documents which should preserve what had first been communicated by oral tradition only, and that demand was certain in its turn to create the supply. It was natural that each of the three great sections of the Church—that of the Hebrew section of the circumcision, represented by James the Bishop of Jerusalem; that of Hellenistic Judaism mingling with the Gentiles, as represented by St. Peter; that of the more purely Gentile churches that had been founded by St. Paul—should have, each of them, in the Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke respectively, that which satisfied its wants. Each of those Gospels, as will be seen, had its distinctive features—St. Matthew conspicuous for the fullest report of discourses, St. Mark for graphic and vivid detail, St. Luke for a wider range of topic and of teaching, as the work of one who had more the training of a skilled historian, and who, though not an eye-witness, based his record upon fuller and more directly personal inquiries. For the circumstances which led to the composition of the fourth Gospel, and the position which it occupied in relation to the Three, see *Introduction to St. John*.

XI. The difference in tone and phraseology between the Gospels and the Epistles may fairly be urged as evidence of the earlier date, if not of the books themselves, yet of the teaching which they embody. (1) Throughout the Gospels the term by which our Lord most commonly describes Himself is the "Son of Man," and it occurs not less than eighty-four times in all. It expressed at once our Lord's fellowship with our humanity, and His specially Messianic character as fulfilling the vision of Dan. vii. 13. The faith of the disciples after the Resurrection and Ascension naturally fastened, however, on the higher truth that the Lord Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God; and the term so familiar to us in the records of the Gospels is not found in one solitary passage through the whole body of the Epistles, and the only examples of its use outside the Gospels are in Acts vii. 56, Rev. i. 13. In the latter of these two passages, it is doubtful, from the absence of the article, whether it is used in the same distinctive sense as in the Gospels, or as meaning simply "*a* son of man." The broad distinction thus presented can hardly be explained except on the hypothesis that the Gospel report of our Lord's teaching is faithful, and, at least, substantially accurate, unaffected by the phraseology and theology even of the earliest periods of the Church's history. (2) Hardly less striking is the contrast between the two groups of books as regards the use of another term—that of the *Church*, or *Ecclesia*—as describing the society of Christ's disciples. In the Acts and Epistles it meets us at every turn, 112 times in all. In the Gospels we find it in two passages only, Matt. xvi. 18, xviii. 17. Here also we may point to the fact as a proof that the reports of our Lord's teaching as preserved in the Gospels were entirely unaffected by the thoughts and language of the Apostolic Church, and bear upon them the face of originality and genuineness. (3) The absence of any reference in the Gospels to the controversies of the first century is another argument of like nature. We speak, and within due limits, legitimately enough, of the characteristic tendencies and aims of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, of their connection with this or that Apostle or school of thought. But if tendencies and aims had prevailed over honesty and faithfulness in reporting, how strong would have been the temptation to put into our Lord's lips words that bore less or directly on the questions which were agitating men's minds—on the necessity or the nullity of circumcision, on justification by faith or works, on eating things sacrificed to idols, on the reverence due to bishops and elders! All these things are, it need hardly be said, conspicuous by their absence. They are after-growths, which the teaching of Christ recorded in the Gospels does not even touch. The only controversies which it knows are those with Pharisees and Sadducees. The writers of the Gospels must have dealt faithfully with the materials which they found ready to their hands, and those materials must have been collected while the words and acts of Jesus were yet fresh in the memories of those who saw and heard them.

XII. It is indirectly a further argument in favour of the early date of these three Gospels that so little has come down to us outside their contents, as to the words and acts of Jesus. It lies in the nature of the case, as is, in part, seen by the success which attended the gleaning of which we have just spoken by St. Luke, in part also by the bold hyperbole of St. John's language as he dwelt on the things that Jesus had said or done (John xxi. 25), that there must have been much that has found no permanent record. The Apocryphal Gospels—few of them, if any (with the possible exception of the *Acta Pilati* and the *Descent into Hades*, known as the *Gospel of Nicodemus*), earlier than the fourth century—give little else but frivolous and fantastic legends. Here and there only are found fragments which may be authentic, though they lie outside the limits of the Canonical Gospels. Such as they are, it is interesting and may be profitable to gather up even these fragments so that nothing may be lost; but the fact that these are all, may fairly be ascribed to the prestige and authority which attached to the Four that we now recognise, and to these only.

I give accordingly, in conclusion, the following sayings, reported as having been among the sayings of the Lord Jesus:—

(1) Quoted by St. Paul in Acts xx. 35, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

(2) An addition to Luke vi. 4, in Codex D, "And on the same day Jesus saw a man working at his craft on the Sabbath-day, and He said unto him, 'Man, if thou knowest what thou doest, then art thou blessed; but if thou knowest not, then art thou accursed, and art a transgressor of the Law.'" There seems no reason why we should not receive the saying as authentic. Its teaching is in harmony with our Lord's reported words and acts, and it brings out with a marvellous force the distinction between the conscious transgression of a law recognised as still binding, and the assertion of a higher law as superseding the lower.

(3) Quoted by Origen (in *Joann.* xix.), "Be ye trustworthy money-changers." The word is the same as that used in the parable of the Talents (Matt. xxv. 27), and may well have been suggested by it. The saying appears to imply a two-fold parable. The disciples of Christ were to be as the money-changers (*a*) in their skill to distinguish the counterfeit coin from the true—to know, as it were, the ring of what was stamped with the King's image and superscription from that which was alloyed and debased; and (*b*) in the activity with which they laboured, and the wisdom which guided their labours so that their Lord, at His coming, might receive His own with usury.

(4) An addition in Codex D, to Matt. xx. 28, "But ye seek (or, perhaps, taking the verb as in the imperative, *seek ye*) to increase from little, and from greater to be less."

(5) From the Epistle of Barnabas, *c.* 4, "Let us resist all iniquity, and hold it in abhorrence."

(6) From the same, *c.* 7, "They who wish to see Me, and to lay hold on My kingdom, must receive Me by affliction and suffering."

(7) From the Gospel of the Hebrews, quoted by Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* ii. 9, § 45), "He that wonders [*i.e.*, apparently, with the wonder of reverential faith] shall reign, and he that reigns shall be made to rest."

(8) From Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* ii. 9, § 45), "Wonder thou at the things that are before thee." Both this and the preceding passage are quoted by Clement to show that in the teaching of Christ, as in that of Plato, wonder is at once the beginning and the end of knowledge.

(9) From the Ebionite Gospel, quoted by Epiphanius (*Hær.* xxx. 16), "I came to abolish sacrifices. and unless ye cease from sacrificing, the wrath (of God) will not cease from you."

(10) Quoted by Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* iv. 6, § 34) and Origen (*de Oratione*, c. 2), "Ask great things, and small shall be added to you: ask heavenly things, and there shall be added unto you earthly things."

(11) Quoted by Justin (*Dial. c. Tryph.* c. 47), and Clement of Alexandria (*Quis dives*, c. 40), "In the things wherein I find you, in them will I judge you."

(12) From Origen (*Comm.* in Jer. iii. p. 778), "He who is nigh unto Me is nigh unto the fire: he who is far from Me is far from the kingdom." Ignatius (*ad Smyrn.* c. 4) has a like saying, but not as a quotation, "To be near the sword is to be near God."

(13) The Pseudo-Clement of Rome (*Ep.* ii. 8), "If ye kept not that which was little, who will give you that which is great?"

(14) From the same (as before), "Keep the flesh pure, and the seal without stain." (The "seal" probably refers to Baptism as the sign of the Covenant.)

(15) From Clement of Alexandria, as a quotation from the Gospel according to the Egyptians (*Strom.* iii. 13, § 92), and the Pseudo-Clement of Rome (*Ep.* ii. 12). Salome, it is said, asked our Lord when His kingdom should come, and the things which He had spoken be accomplished; and He answered, "When the two shall be one, and that which is without as that which is within, and the male with the female, neither male nor female." Another like saying is given by the Pseudo-Linus, "Unless ye make the left as the right, and the right as the left, and that which is above as that which is below, and that which is behind as that which is before, ye know not the kingdom of God." In the first of these we may trace a feeling analogous to that expressed by St. Paul in Gal. iii. 28; 1 Cor. vii. 29.

(16) Origen (in Matt. xiii. 2), "For them that are infirm was I infirm, and for them that hunger did I hunger, and for them that thirst did I thirst."

(17) Jerome (in Eph. v. 3), "Never be ye joyful, except when ye have seen your brother (dwelling) in love."

(18) Ignatius (*ad Smyrn.* c. 3). Our Lord, after His Resurrection, said to Peter, "Take hold, handle Me, and see that I am not a bodiless demon." This is obviously a reproduction of Luke xxiv. 39—the peculiarity being the use of the word "demon" for "spirit."

(19) *The Clementine Homilies*, xii. 29, "Good must needs come, but blessed is He through whom it comes."

(20) Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* v. 10, § 64), "My mystery is for Me, and for the sons of My house." *The Clementine Homilies* (xix. 20) gives another version, "Keep My mysteries for Me, and for the sons of My house."

(21) Eusebius (*Theophania*, iv. 13), "I will choose these things to Myself. Very excellent are those whom My Father that is in Heaven hath given Me."

(22) Papias (quoted by Irenæus, v. 33, 3). "The Lord said, speaking of His kingdom, The days will come in which vines shall spring up, each having ten thousand stocks, and on each stock ten thousand branches, and on each branch ten thousand shoots, and on each shoot ten thousand bunches, and on each bunch ten thousand grapes, and each grape when pressed shall give five-and-twenty measures of wine. And when any saint shall have laid hold on one bunch, another shall cry, 'I am a better bunch, take me; through me bless the Lord.'" This is followed by a like statement as to the productiveness of ears of corn, and then by a question from Judas the traitor, who asks, "How shall such products come from the Lord?" and who receives the answer, "They shall see who come to Me in these times."

The above extracts are taken from Dr. Westcott's *Introduction to the Gospels, App. C.* In some of them, as has been said above, there is no internal difficulty in receiving the words as they stand, as not unworthy of the Teacher to whom they are ascribed. In others, as notably in (15) and (22), whatever nucleus of truth there was at first has been encrusted over with mystic or fantastic imaginations. None, of course, can claim any authority, but some, pre-eminently, perhaps, (2), (3), and (10), are at least suggestive enough to be fruitful in deep thoughts and salutary warnings.

## V.—THE HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS.

I. The Christian Church found itself, as we have seen, in the middle of the second century, in possession of the four Canonical Gospels, and of these alone, as authentic records of the words and acts of its Lord. Each was obviously but a fragmentary memoir. They were almost as obviously, though, in part, derived from common sources, independent of each other. It was natural, as soon as they came to be read and studied by men with anything like the culture of historians, that they should wish to combine what they found separate, and to construct, as far as might be, a continuous narrative. So, as we have seen, Tatian, of the Syrian Church, compiled his *Diatessaron* (*circ.* A.D. 170), a book which, though now altogether lost, was once so popular that Theodoret (*Hœr.* i. 20) states in the fifth century that he had found not fewer than 200 copies in the churches of his own diocese; and about half a century later, a like work was undertaken by Ammonius of Alexandria. The historical mode of study fell, however, for many centuries into disuse, and it was not till the revival of learning in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that attempts, more or less elaborate, were made, first by Gerson, the famous Chancellor of the University of Paris (*ob.* A.D. 1429), to whom some have attributed the authorship of the *De Imitatione Christi*, and Osiander, the friend of Luther (A.D. 1561), to place all the facts recorded in the four Gospels in their order of chronological sequence. Since that time Harmonies have multiplied, and while, on the one hand, they have often helped the student to see facts in their right relation to each other, they have, on the other, it may be feared, tended to perplex him by their divergent methods and consequently discordant conclusions.

II. It may be admitted that the four Gospels do not lend themselves very readily to this process. That of St. John, which is most precise in its notes of time, as connecting well nigh every incident which it records with a Jewish feast, is the one which stands most apart, with only here and there a connecting-link, from the other three, confining itself almost exclusively to our Lord's ministry in Judæa, as they confine themselves to His work in Galilee. The two which have so much in common, St. Matthew and St. Mark, that the one has been thought, though wrongly, to be but an abridgment of the other, differ so much in their arrangement of the facts which they record (see Notes on Matt. viii. and ix.) that it is clear that either one or both must have been led to adopt an order which was not that of actual sequence. St. Luke, though aiming, more than the others, at chronological exactness (Luke i. 3), was dependent on the reports of others. Probably the very mode in which facts and sayings were for several years transmitted orally and separately, made it often difficult to assign to each event its proper place in the series. The assumption, on which some have started, that the order in each Gospel must be accepted as free from the possibility of error in the order of its incidents, has led to an artificial and arbitrary multiplication of similar events, such as would at once be dismissed as untenable in dealing with any other histories. Men have found in the Gospels three blind men at Jericho, and two anointings at Bethany. The counter-assumption that no two events, no two discourses in the Gospels could be like each other and yet distinct, has led to equally arbitrary and fantastic curtailment of the facts. Men have assumed the identity of the feeding of the Five and of the Four Thousand; of the anointing which St. Luke records in chap. vii., in the house of Simon the Pharisee, with that which the other Gospels record as taking place in the house of Simon the leper (Matt. xxvi. 6—13; Mark xiv. 3—9; John xii. 1—11); of the cleansing of the Temple in John ii., at the commencement of our Lord's ministry, with that which the other Gospels relate as occurring at its close (Matt. xxi. 12—17; Mark xi. 15—19; Luke xix. 45—48).

III. Admitting, however, these elements of difficulty and uncertainty, it yet remains true that they are more than balanced by the advantage of being able to connect one Gospel with another, and to read the narratives of the first three in their right relation to those of the fourth. If difficulties present themselves, so also do coincidences, often of great significance and interest. It is believed, therefore, that it will be a gain for the readers of this Volume to have, ready at hand for reference, such a harmonised table of its contents. That which follows is based, though not without variations here and there, made in the exercise of an independent judgment, upon the arrangement of the *Synopsis Evangelica* of the great German scholar, Tischendorf, as that in its turn was based upon a like work of Wieseler's. It has been thought expedient, as generally in the Notes of this Commentary, to give results rather than to discuss the views which have been maintained on each point that has been thought open to discussion by this or that writer. It is not pretended that what is now presented is throughout free from uncertainty, and where the uncertainty exists it will be indicated in the usual way, by a note of interrogation—(?).

IV. It will be expedient, however, to state briefly what are the chief *data* for the harmony that follows, both in relation (A) to external history, and (B) to the internal arrangement of the Gospel narrative that follows:—

A.—(1) Luke iii. 1 fixes the beginning of John the Baptist's ministry in the fifteenth year of Tiberius. This may be reckoned, either from the death of Augustus (A.U.C. 767), or from A.U.C. 765, when he associated Tiberius with himself as sharing the imperial power. The latter calculation is the one generally adopted. As our Lord is stated to have been at that time "about thirty years of age," this would place His birth in A.U.C. 752 or 750. (2) The narrative of Matt. ii. 1 shows the birth of Jesus to have preceded the death of Herod the Great, which took place shortly before the Passover of A.U.C. 750 or B.C. 4. (3) John ii. 20 fixes the first Passover in our Lord's ministry as forty-six years from the beginning of Herod's work of reconstruction, on which he entered in A.U.C. 734—*i.e.*, in A.U.C. 780; and this agrees with St. Luke's statement as to His age at the commencement of His ministry.

Under (B) the chief points are those which are common to all four Gospels. (1) The baptism of Jesus; (2) the imprisonment of the Baptist; (3) the feeding of the Five Thousand; (4) the last entry into Jerusalem, followed by the Crucifixion. In addition to these, as notes of time peculiar to the Gospels that contain them, we note (1) St. Luke's second-first Sabbath (see Note on Luke vi. 1), which, however, is for us too obscure to be of much service as a landmark, and the successive feasts mentioned by St. John, *sc.*, (2) the Passover of chap. ii. 13; (3) the unnamed Feast of chap. v. 1; (4) the Passover of chap. vi. 4, coinciding with the feeding of the Five Thousand, and therefore important in its bearing on the other Gospels; (5) the Feast of Tabernacles in chap. vii. 2; (6) the Feast of the Dedication in chap. x. 22; and, lastly, (7) the final Passover (chap. xii. 1), in common with the other three. The last-mentioned Feast, however, while it serves, on the one hand, to connect the history with that of the other Gospels, introduces a new difficulty. It cannot be questioned that the impression naturally left by Matt. xxvi. 17—19, Mark xiv. 12—16, Luke xxii. 7—13, is that the meal of which our Lord partook with the disciples was the actual Passover. It can as little be questioned that the impression naturally left by John xiii. 1, 29, xviii. 28, is that the Passover was eaten by the Jews on the evening after the Crucifixion. The question is hardly important except as bearing upon the trustworthiness or authority of the Gospel narratives, and a discussion of the various solutions of the problem will be found in the Notes on the passages of St. John above referred to. The view which commends itself to the present writer, as most probable, is that which assumes our Lord and the disciples to have eaten the actual Passover at the same hour as the majority of the other Jews were eating it, and that the priests and others who took part in the proceedings against our Lord postponed their Passover, under the pressure of circumstances, till the *afternoon*, not the *evening*, of Friday (John xviii. 28). That Friday, it may be noted, was the Preparation, not for the Passover as such, but for the great Sabbath of the Paschal week. (See *Excursus F. on St. John.*)

A further, but minor, difficulty presents itself as to the hour of the Crucifixion. Mark xv. 26 names the "third hour"—*i.e.*, 9 a.m.; and the "sixth hour," or noon, is fixed by the first three Gospels as the time when the mysterious darkness began to fall upon the scene (Matt. xxvii. 45; Mark xv. 33; Luke xxiii. 44). St. John, on the other hand, names "about the sixth hour" (xix. 14) as the time when Jesus was condemned by Pilate. Here, however, the explanation lies almost on the surface. St. John used the Roman reckoning, and the Three the Jewish; so that their "early in the morning," and his "about 6 A.M." came to the same thing. (See, however, Note on John iv. 6.)

V. A word ought, perhaps, to be said in explanation of the fact that we place the birth of Jesus, not as might have been expected, in A.D. 1, but in B.C. 4. The mode of reckoning by the "year of our Lord" was first introduced by Dionysius the Little, a monk of Rome, in his *Cyclus Paschalis*, a treatise on the computation of Easter, in the first half of the sixth century. Up to that time the received computation of events through the western portion of Christendom had been from the supposed foundation of Rome (B.C. 754), and events were marked accordingly as happening in this or that year, *Anno Urbis Conditæ*, or by the initial letters A.U.C. In the East some historians continued to reckon from the era of Seleucidæ, which dated from the accession of Seleucus Nicator to the monarchy of Syria, in B.C. 312. The new computation was naturally received by Christendom (it first appears as a date for historical events in Italy in the sixth century), and adopted, without adequate inquiry, till the sixteenth century. A more careful examination of the *data* presented by the Gospel history, and, in particular, by the fact that the birth of Christ preceded the death of Herod, showed that Dionysius had made a mistake of four years, or perhaps more, in his calculations. The received reckoning had, however, taken too firm a root to be disturbed by re-dating all events in history since the Christian era; and it was accordingly thought simpler to accept it, and to rectify the error, as far as the Gospel history was concerned, by fixing the birth of Christ at its true date, B.C. 4.

## VI.—CHRONOLOGICAL HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS.

B.C.

5. Birth of John the Baptist, June (?), October (?); birth of Jesus, December (?).

4. *Census under Quirinus*, or *Cyrenius; birth* of Jesus, January (?), April (?); Presentation in the Temple; Flight into Egypt, March; *death of Herod, just before the Passover;* return of Joseph and Mary to Nazareth (?), (Matt. ii. 19—23).

3. Augustus assigns Judæa to Archelaus, Galilee to Antipas; *birth of Apollonius of Tyana* (?).

2\.

1\.

A.D.

1\.

2. Birth of John the Apostle (?).

3. *Birth of Seneca* (?).

4\.

5. *Birth of St. Paul* (?).

6. *Death of Hillel; deposition of Archelaus; Judæa a Roman province.*

7. *Insurrection of Judas of Galilee.*

8\.

9. First visit of Jesus to the Temple (Luke ii. 41—52); Passover.

10\.

11\.

12\.

13\.

14. *Death of Augustus; Tiberius, Emperor.*

A.D.

15\.

16\.

17\.

18. *Tiberias built by Antipas; death of Livy and Ovid.*

19. *Jews expelled from Italy.*

20. Death of Joseph (?).

21\.

22\.

23\.

24\.

25. Pontius Pilate appointed Procurator of Judæa.

26. Preaching of John the Baptist, January (?), or in the previous Autumn (?), (Matt. iii. 1—12; Mark i. 1—8; Luke iii. 1—18).

— Baptism of Jesus (Matt. iii. 13—17; Mark i. 9—11; Luke iii. 21, 22).

— The Temptation in the wilderness (Matt. iv. 1—11; Mark i. 12, 13; Luke iv. 1—13; John i. 19—34).

— Call of Peter, Andrew, John, Philip, and Nathanael (John i. 35—51).

— The marriage at Cana (John ii. 1—11).

— PASSOVER IN JERUSALEM (John ii. 13—25); Nicodemus (John iii. 1—21); Jesus baptises in Judæa (John iii. 22—36); John the Baptist imprisoned (Matt. xiv. 3—5; Mark vi. 17—20; Luke iii. 19, 20); Jesus returns through Samaria (John iv. 1—42) into Galilee (Matt. iv. 12; Mark i. 14; Luke iv. 14).

A.D.

26. Jesus again at Cana; healing of the son of the king's officer of Capernaum (John iv. 43—54).

— The first sermon at Nazareth; DAY OF ATONEMENT (?); October (?); settlement at Capernaum (Luke iv. 16—30).

27. FEAST OF PASSOVER, March (?); PENTECOST, May, A.D. 26 (?); TABERNACLES, October, A.D. 26 (?); or, PURIM, February, A.D. 27 (?), most probably the last, at Jerusalem; the cripple at Bethesda (John v. 1—9).

— Jesus begins His public ministry in Galilee (Matt. iv. 17; Mark i. 14, 15).

— Call of Peter, Andrew, James, and John (Matt. iv. 18—22; Mark i. 16—20; Luke v. 1—11, ?).

— Miracles at Capernaum (Matt. viii. 14—17; Mark i. 29—34; Luke iv. 31—41).

— Mission-journey through Galilee, including Chorazin (?), Bethsaida (?), &c. (Matt. iv. 23; Mark i. 38, 39; Luke iv. 42—44).

— Leper healed (Matt. viii. 1—4; Mark i. 40—45; Luke v. 12—15).

— Capernaum: paralytic healed (Matt. ix. 1—8; Mark ii. 1—12; Luke v. 18—26).

— Capernaum: call of Levi = Matthew (Matt. ix. 9—17; Mark ii. 13—22; Luke v. 27, 28).

— Near Capernaum: second-first Sabbath, March (?), April (?), (Matt. xii. 1—8; Mark ii. 23—28; Luke vi. 1—5).

— Capernaum: the withered hand healed on the Sabbath (Matt. xii. 9—13; Mark iii. 1—6; Luke vi. 6—11).

— Choice of the Twelve Apostles (Matt. x. 2—4; Mark iii. 16—19; Luke vi. 14—16).

— The Sermons on the Mount (Matt. v., vi., vii.) and on the Plain (Luke vi. 26—65).

— Capernaum: centurion's servant healed (Matt. viii. 5—13; Luke vii. 1—10).

— Nain: widow's son raised to life (Luke vii. 11—17).

— Messengers sent by John the Baptist (Matt. xi. 2—19; Luke vii. 18—35).

— House of Simon the Pharisee; the woman that was a sinner (Luke vii. 36—50).

— Journey through Palestine, followed by devout women (Luke viii. 1—3).

— The charge of casting out devils by Beelzebub (Matt. xii. 22—37; Mark iii. 22—30; Luke xi. 14—26).

— Visit of the Mother and Brethren of Jesus (Matt. xii. 46—50; Mark iii. 31—35; Luke viii. 19—21).

— The first teaching by parables (Matt. xiii. 1—53; Mark iv. 1—34; Luke viii. 4—18; xiii. 18—21).

— Sea of Galilee: the tempest calmed (Matt. viii. 23—27; Mark iv. 35—41; Luke viii. 22—25).

— The Gadarene demoniac (Matt. viii. 28—34; Mark v. 1—20; Luke viii. 26—39).

— The daughter of Jairus raised to life (Matt. ix. 18—26; Mark v. 22—43; Luke viii. 40—56).

— Nazareth; second discourse in the synagogue (Matt. xiii. 54—58; Mark vi. 1—6).

— Renewed journey through Galilee (Matt. ix. 35—38; Mark vi. 6).

— Mission of the Twelve Apostles (Matt. x. 1—42; Mark vi. 7—13; Luke ix. 1—6).

— Execution of John the Baptist, March (?), (Matt. xiv. 6—12; Mark vi. 21—29).

— Herod the Tetrarch hears of Jesus (Matt. xiv. 1, 2; Mark vi. 14—16; Luke ix. 7—9).

— Return of the Twelve to Bethsaida; feeding of the Five Thousand; PASSOVER (Matt. xiv. 13—21; Mark vi. 30—44; Luke ix. 10—17; John vi. 1—14).

A.D.

27. Sea of Galilee: Jesus walks on the waters (Matt. xiv. 22—33; Mark vi. 45—52; John vi. 15—21).

— Gennesaret: works of healing (Matt. xiv. 34—36; Mark vi. 53—56).

— Capernaum: SABBATH AFTER PASSOVER; discourse on the Bread of Life (John vi. 22—65).

— Pharisees from Jerusalem charge the disciples with eating with unwashed hands (Matt. xv. 1—20; Mark vii. 1—23).

— Coasts of Tyre and Sidon: daughter of Syro-Phœnician woman healed (Matt. xv. 21—28; Mark vii. 25—30).

— Deaf and dumb (Matt. xv. 29—31; Mark vii. 31—37).

— Feeding of the Four Thousand (Matt. xv. 32—38; Mark viii. 1—9).

— Pharisees and Sadducees demand a sign from heaven (Matt. xvi. 1—4; Mark viii. 10—12).

— Bethsaida: blind man healed (Mark viii. 22—26).

— Cæsarea Philippi: Peter's confession (Matt. xvi. 13—28; Mark viii. 27—ix. 1; Luke ix. 18—27; John vi. 66—71, ?).

— Hermon (?); Tabor (?): the Transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 1—13; Mark ix. 2—13; Luke ix. 28—36).

— Base of Hermon (?): demoniac healed (Matt. xvii. 14—21; Mark ix. 14—29; Luke ix. 37—43).

— The Passion foretold (Matt. xvii. 22, 23; Mark ix. 30—32; Luke ix. 43—45).

— Capernaum (?): payment of *didrachma*, or Temple-rate, April (?), May (?), (Matt. xvii. 24—27).

— Rivalry of disciples, and consequent teaching (Matt. xviii. 1—35; Mark ix. 33—50; Luke ix. 46—50).

— Journey through Samaria; new disciples; Jerusalem: FEAST OF TABERNACLES, October (Matt. viii. 19—22; Luke ix. 51—62; John vii. 1—53).

— Jerusalem: the woman taken in adultery (John vii. 53—viii. 11).

— Jerusalem: discourse in Temple; blind man healed at Siloam (John viii. 21—59; John ix. 1—41).

— Jerusalem: the Good Shepherd (John x. 1—18).

— Mission and return of the Seventy (Luke x. 1—24).

— Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke x. 25—37).

— Bethany: Jesus in the house of Martha (Luke x. 38—42).

— Disciples taught to pray (Luke xi. 1—13).

— Two blind men healed (Matt. ix. 27—31).

— Demoniac healed; subsequent teaching (Matt. ix. 32—34; xii. 38—45; Luke xi. 14—36).

— Peræa (?); Galilee (?): teaching on various occasions (Luke xi. 37—xiii. 21).

— Jerusalem: FEAST OF DEDICATION, December 20—27 (John x. 22—39).

28. January. Jesus on the east side of Jordan (John x. 40—42).

— Jesus begins to prepare for the journey to Jerusalem; message from Herod (Luke xiii. 22—35).

— East side of Jordan: teaching, including parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Piece of Money, Prodigal Son, Unjust Steward, the Rich Man and Lazarus, &c. (Luke xiv. 1—xvii. 10).

— Progress towards Jerusalem (Matt. xix. 1; Mark x. 1; Luke xvii. 11).

— The ten lepers; teaching, including parables of Unjust Judge, Pharisee and Publican (Luke xvii. 12—xviii. 14).

— Teaching as to divorce and infants (Matt. xix. 3—15; Mark x. 2—16; Luke xviii. 15—17, infants only).

A.D.
28. Dialogue with the rich young ruler (?), (Matt. xix. 16—30; Mark x. 17—31; Luke xviii. 18—30).
— Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard (Matt. xx. 1—16).
— Bethany: raising of Lazarus (John xi. 1—46).
— Ephraim: retirement of Jesus (John xi. 47—54).
— Request of the sons of Zebedee (Matt. xx. 20—28; Mark x. 35—45).
— Jericho: two blind men healed (Matt. xx. 29—34; Mark x. 46—52; Luke xviii. 35—43).
— Jericho: Jesus in the house of Zacchæus (Luke xix. 1—10).
— Parable of the Pounds (Luke xix. 11—28).
— Bethany: Jesus anointed by Mary; EVENING OF SABBATH BEFORE THE PASSOVER.
— Bethany and Jerusalem: FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK: kingly Entry into the city (Matt. xxi. 1—11; Mark xi. 1—11; Luke xix. 29—44; John xii. 12—19).
— SECOND DAY OF THE WEEK: Bethany and Jerusalem; the barren fig-tree (Matt. xxi. 18—22; Mark xi. 12—14, 20—25).
— Cleansing of the Temple (Matt. xxi. 12—17; Mark xi. 15—19; Luke xix. 45—48).
— Parables; discussions with Pharisees, Herodians, Sadducees, and lawyers (Matt. xxi. 23—xxii. 46; Mark xi. 27; xii. 40; Luke xx. 1—44).
— The last discourse against the Pharisees (Matt. xxiii. 1—39; Mark xii. 38—40; Luke xx. 45—47).
— The widow's mite (Mark xii. 41—44; Luke xxi. 1—4).
— The Greeks in Jerusalem (?); the voice from heaven (John xii. 20—36).
— Prophetic discourse of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the second Advent (Matt. xxiv. 1—42; Mark xiii. 1—37; Luke xxi. 5—36).
— The parables of the Wise and Foolish Virgins, the Talents, the Sheep and the Goats (Matt. xxv. 1—46).
— THIRD DAY OF THE WEEK: passed by Jesus in Bethany and Gethsemane (?), Jerusalem (?); compact of Judas with the chief priests (Matt. xxvi. 1—5, 14—16; Mark xiv. 1, 2, 10, 11; Luke xxii. 1—6).

A.D.
28. FOURTH DAY OF THE WEEK: nothing recorded; Bethany (?), Gethsemane (?), Jerusalem (?).
— FIFTH DAY OF THE WEEK: Peter and John sent from Bethany to Jerusalem; THE PASSOVER SUPPER; the Feast of the New Covenant; dialogue and discourses.
— Gethsemane (Matt. xxvi. 17—46; Mark xiv. 12—42; Luke xxii. 7—46; John xiii. 1—xvii. 26).
— SIXTH DAY OF THE WEEK: 3 A.M., Jesus taken in Gethsemane; brought before Annas; Peter's denial (Matt. xxvi. 47—75; Mark xiii. 43—72; Luke xxii. 47—62; John xviii. 2—18).
— 6 A.M. The trial before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin; their second meeting; Jesus sent to Pilate; suicide of Judas.
— Jesus before Pilate, Herod, and Pilate again; the people demand release of Barabbas; Jesus led to Golgotha (Matt. xxvi. 59—xxvii. 34; Mark xiv. 55—xv. 23; Luke xxii. 63—xxiii. 33; John xviii. 19—xix. 17).
— 9 A.M. The Crucifixion (Matt. xxvii. 35—44; Mark xv. 24—32; Luke xxiii. 33—43; John xix. 18—27).
— Noon to 3 P.M. Darkness over the land; death of Jesus (Matt. xxvii. 45—56; Mark xv. 29—41; Luke xxiii. 44—46; John xix. 28—30).
— 6 P.M. Embalmment and entombment by Joseph of Arimathæa, Nicodemus, and devout women; priests apply for a guard over the sepulchre (Matt. xxvii. 57—66; Mark xv. 42—47; Luke xxiii. 50—56; John xix. 38—42).
— SABBATH: disciples and women rest (Luke xxiii. 56).
— FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK: the Resurrection (see Notes on Matt. xxviii. for the order of the manifestations), (Matt. xxviii. 1—20; Mark xvi. 1—20; Luke xxiv. 1—43; John xx. 1—xxi. 25).
— TEN DAYS BEFORE PENTECOST (?): the Ascension (Mark xvi. 19, 20; Luke xxiv. 44—53).

[The dates in this Table are based upon an independent study of the Gospel records. Those in the margin of the Gospels themselves are taken from the Authorised version as commonly printed, and represent the system of Chronology adopted by Archbishop Usher. Dates more or less varying have been given by other writers.—E. H. P.]

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW.

# INTRODUCTION

TO

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW.

**I. The Author.**—The facts presented by the New Testament records are few and simple. In Mark ii. 14, Luke v. 27, we find Levi, the son of Alphæus, sitting at the receipt of custom (better, perhaps, *at the custom-house*) in Capernaum. He is identified by Matt. ix. 9 with the "man that was called Matthew." The second name may have been given by our Lord, as Peter was given to Simon, or taken by him of his own accord. Its meaning, as "God-given," like Theodorus, Theodoretus, Dorotheus, Adeodatus, made it a suitable name for one to take for whom old things had passed away, and all things had become new, and who thanked God for that unspeakable gift; and its historical associations with the name of the great Mattathias, the father of the Maccabæan heroes, made it—as we see in the case of Matthias, another form of the name (see Note on Acts i. 23)—one of the names which, like Judas and Simon, had become popular with all true patriots. In the lists of the Apostles, his name is always found in the second group of four, with Thomas, James (or Jacob) the son of Alphæus, and Judas the son (or brother) of James (see Notes on Matt. x. 3). If, as seems probable, we recognise in Mark ii. 14 the same Alphæus as in Mark iii. 18, we have another instance, in addition to the sons of Jona and of Zebedee, of two, or possibly three, brothers called to act together as Apostles. A probable conjecture leads us a step further. The name of Matthew is coupled, in all the lists in the Gospels, with that of Thomas — sometimes one, sometimes the other name taking precedence—and as Thomas, or Didymus (John xi. 16, xxi. 2), signifies "Twin," there is, *primâ facie*, good ground for the inference that he was so known as the twin-brother of Matthew. The Alphæus who is named as the father of the second James in the lists of the Apostles, is commonly identified with the *Clopas* of John xix. 25, where the Authorised version wrongly gives Cleophas. This cannot, however, be regarded as certain, and there are serious considerations against it. Mary, the wife of Clopas, is described (Mark xv. 40) as the mother of James the less and Joses. But the union of these two names (as in Mark vi. 3) suggests that the Evangelist speaks of the brethren of our Lord, and therefore, not of James the Apostle. Either, therefore, Clopas and Alphæus are not different forms of the same name, or, if they are, the two forms were used for the sake of clearness, to distinguish the father of the three or four Apostles from the father, on this assumption, of the four "brethren" of our Lord.

Assuming these facts, the circumstances of the call of Matthew gain a fresh interest. The brothers of the Evangelist may have been already among the disciples who had acknowledged Jesus as the Christ, or at least as a great Prophet. Matthew may have seen and heard Him as He taught in the synagogue of Capernaum. The event which immediately preceded his call, had been the healing of the man sick of the palsy, and the proclamation that the Son of Man had power on earth to forgive sins (Matt. ix. 1—8; Mark ii. 1—12; Luke iii. 17—26). We are led to believe, by the readiness with which he obeyed the call of Jesus, that the good seed had already been sown. But he was a publican. He had chosen for himself a calling more lucrative than that of the fisherman or the peasant, but one which brought with it an evil repute and a sense of degradation. The Pharisees shrank from his touch. His companions were "publicans and sinners" like himself. Could he any longer claim to be a "son of Abraham?" (Luke xix. 9.) Would the new Teacher deign to receive him, or even speak to him? To one in such a state of feeling, the command, "Follow Me," would be in itself a gospel. Regardless, apparently, of its being one of the traditional fast-days, which the Pharisees were observing with their usual strictness (see Note on Matt. ix. 14), he called together his friends and neighbours, mostly of the same calling as himself, and gave them a farewell feast, that they too might hear "the words of grace," in which his soul had found the starting-point of a new life (Matt. ix. 10; Mark ii. 15; Luke v. 29). Of the rest of his life, we know but very little. Called now to be a disciple, he, with his brothers, was chosen afterwards, much, we may believe, to his own astonishment, to be one of the Twelve who were the special envoys of the anointed King. The union of his name with that of Thomas suggests the inference that the two twins were joined together in the work of proclaiming the gospel. He is with the other disciples in the upper chamber after the Ascension, and on the day of Pentecost (Acts i. 13; ii. 1). From that date, as far as the New Testament is concerned, he disappears from view. A comparatively late tradition (Euseb. *Hist.* iii. 24; Clem. Alex. *Strom.* vi.) represents him as having preached for fifteen years in Judæa, and ultimately died a martyr's death in Parthia or Ethiopia (Socrates, *Hist.* i. 19). Clement of Alexandria, however, speaks of his dying a natural death. The fact that Thomas also is reported to have founded churches in Parthia and Ethiopia (Euseb. *Hist.* iii. 1) is, at least, in harmony with the thought that then, as before, during their Lord's ministry on earth, they had been fellow-workers together to the end. An independent tradition that Pantænus, the great Alexandrian Missionary, had found the Gospel of St. Matthew among the Indians (Euseb. *Hist.* v. 10) points in the same direction. His asceticism led him to a purely vegetarian diet (Clem. Alex. *Pædag.* ii. 1, § 16). A characteristic saying is ascribed to him by Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* vii. 13) — "If the neighbour of an elect man sin, the elect man himself has sinned, for had he conducted himself as the Word (or, perhaps, *as Reason*) commands, his neighbour would have felt such reverence for his life as to refrain from sin." The thought thus expressed is obviously one that might naturally come from the lips of the Apostle, who had not only recorded the Sermon on the Mount, but had framed his life upon its teaching. (Comp. especially Matt. v. 13—16.)

**II. The Authorship and Sources of the Gospel.**—As has been said above (*Introduction to the First Three Gospels*), the very obscurity of St. Matthew's name and the odium attached to his calling, made it antecedently improbable that a later pseudonymous writer would have chosen him as the Apostle on whom to affiliate a book which he wished to invest with a counterfeit authority. On the other hand, assuming his authorship as a hypothesis calling for examination, there are many coincidences which at least render it probable. His occupation as a publican must have involved a certain clerkly culture which would make him, as it were, the scholar of the company of the Twelve, acquainted, as his calling required him to be, with Greek as well as Aramaic, familiar with pen and paper. Then, or at a later date, as growing out of that culture, he must have acquired that familiarity with the writings of the Old Testament which makes his Gospel almost a manual of Messianic prophecy.* The external evidence begins, as we have seen, with Papias (A.D. 170), who states that Matthew compiled a record of the "oracles" or "sayings" of the Lord Jesus (Euseb. *Hist.* iii. 39). As the work of Papias is known to us only by a few fragmentary quotations, we have, of course, no adequate *data* for proving the identity of the book which he names with what we now know as the Gospel according to Matthew. But the account which he gives of it shows a precise agreement with the prominence given in that Gospel more than in any other to our Lord's discourses; and it is, to say the least, a strained hypothesis, hardly likely to suggest itself except for the sake of a foregone conclusion, to assume the existence of a vanished Gospel bearing Matthew's name, and afterwards superseded by the work of a pseudonymous writer. Papias, it may be added, is described by Eusebius (*Hist.* iii. 39) as having been a hearer of St. John and a friend of Polycarp. He describes himself as caring less for what he found in books—thus implying the existence of many narratives such as St. Luke speaks of (chap. i. 1)—than from what he gathered by personal inquiry from the elders who remembered the Apostles, and who could thus repeat what the Lord Jesus had taught. To him the "living voice," still abiding with the Church, was the most precious of all records, and upon these he based what appears to have been the first Commentary on the Gospel-history and the words of Jesus. He names Aristion and John the Presbyter as his two chief informants. Eusebius, while admitting his industry in thus collecting the fragments of apostolic tradition, looks on him as wanting in discernment, and mingling with what was authentic matter that which was strange and legendary. Among these fragments he seems to have included the narrative of the woman taken in adultery ("a woman accused before the Lord of many sins," Euseb. *Hist.* iii. 39), which, though found at present in St. John, bears every mark of having been inserted in that Gospel after it had left the hands of its writer. (See Notes on John viii. 1—11.)

**III. The Aim and Characteristics of the Gospel.**—There was a widely-diffused tradition, as early as the second century, that the Gospel of St. Matthew had been written primarily for Hebrew Christians. By many it was believed that it had been written originally in the Hebrew or Aramaic of the time, and that we have only a version of it. So Papias writes that Matthew composed his Gospel in the Hebrew tongue, and that each interpreted it as he could (Euseb. *Hist.* iii. 39); and the statement is repeated by Irenæus (*Hær.* iii. 1), who adds, that it was written while St. Peter and St. Paul were preaching the gospel at Rome, *i.e., circ.* A.D. 63—65, and by Jerome (*Præf. in Matt.*). There is, however, no evidence of the actual existence of such a Hebrew Gospel, and the Greek text now received bears no marks of being a translation. The belief that it was, in the intention of the writer, meant for readers who were of the stock of Abraham, receives, at any rate, abundant confirmation from its internal peculiarities. It presents, as we have already seen, numerous parallelisms with the Epistle which James, the brother of the Lord, addressed to the Twelve Tribes scattered abroad (p. xviii.). It begins with a genealogy—a "book of the generations" of the Christ (Matt. i. 1)—after the manner of the old Hebrew histories (Gen. v. 1; x. 1; xxxvi. 1; Ruth iv. 8). It is contented to trace the descent of the Christ from Abraham through David and the kingly line. (See Note on Luke iii. 23.) It dwells, as has been said, with far greater fulness than any other Gospel, on the Messianic prophecies, direct or typical, of the Old Testament. It does not explain Jewish customs, as St. Mark and St. Luke do. (Comp. Matt. xv. 1, 2, with Mark vii. 3, 4.) It sets forth more fully than they do the contrast between the royal law, the perfect law of freedom (Jas. i. 25; ii. 12), and the corrupt traditions and casuistry of the scribes (Matt. v., vi., xxiii.). It uses the distinctly Hebrew formula of "the kingdom of heaven,"* where the other Evangelists speak of "the kingdom of God." It records the rending of the veil of the Temple, the earthquake and the signs that followed it, which, at the time, could hardly have had any special significance except for Jews (Matt. xxvii. 51—53). It reports and refutes the explanation which the Jewish priests gave at the time he wrote, of the marvel of the emptied sepulchre (Matt. xxviii. 11—15). It dwells more than the others do on the aspect of the future kingdom which represents the Apostles as sitting on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. xx. 28). Such features were naturally to be looked for in a Gospel intended for Israelites. We may add that they were also natural in the Gospel of the publican. Foremost among the emotions of one who was called from the receipt of custom, would be the joy that he too was now, at last, recognised as a child of Abraham. To him it would be a welcome task to contrast the higher and purer doctrine of the Lord who had called him, with that of the Pharisees who had scorned and thrust him out. We may, perhaps, even trace the influence of his experience as a collector of customs, in the care with which he brings together his Master's warnings against the vain and rash swearing, and the false distinctions as to the validity of different oaths (Matt. v. 34—37; xxiii. 16—22) which, common as they were in all times and places, were sure to be loudest and least trustworthy in disputes between the publican and the payers of an *ad valorem* duty.

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* In St. Matthew's Gospel there are no less than eleven direct citations from the Old Testament, not including those reported as spoken by our Lord. In St. Mark there are two, of which one is doubtful; in St. Luke three; in St. John nine. It is, on any view, striking, that this reference to the teaching of the older Scriptures should characterise the Gospels of the two Apostles rather than those of the two Evangelists who wrote specially for Gentiles.

* The phrase occurs thirty-two times in St. Matthew, and nowhere else in the New Testament.

There was, however, another aspect of the publican character. The work of St. Matthew had brought him into contact with those who were known as the "sinners of the Gentiles" (Gal. ii. 15). He had called them to share his joy in the first glow of his conversion (Matt. ix. 10). The new consciousness of being indeed one of a chosen and peculiar people passed, not, as with the Pharisees, into the stiffness of a national exclusive pride, but, as a like consciousness as did afterwards in St. Paul, into the sense of universal brotherhood. And so he is careful to record that visit of the Magi in whom Christendom has rightly seen the first-fruits of the calling of the Gentiles (Matt. ii. 1—12). He dwells, if not exclusively, yet emphatically, on the far-off prospect of men coming from east and west, and north and south, and sitting down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob (Matt. viii. 11). He records the parable which represents the servants of the great King as sent forth to gather guests for the marriage feast from the "by-ways" of the Gentile world (Matt. xxii. 10). He sets forth the law of compassionate judgment, which shall make the doom of Tyre and Sidon more tolerable than that of Chorazin and Bethsaida (Matt. xi. 21—24), and take as its standard, when all the Gentiles are gathered round the throne of the Judge, not the specific truths revealed in Christ, but the great laws of kindness which are stamped everywhere, even when neglected and transgressed, upon the hearts and consciences of those who have known no other revelation. (See Notes on Matt. xxv. 31—40.)

Lastly, it is in St. Matthew that we find recorded the full commission, anticipating the gospel as St. Paul afterwards preached it, which bade the disciples not to circumcise, but to baptise—to baptise, not converts from Israel only, but "all the Gentiles," the outlying people of the world, of every race and speech. (See Notes on Matt. xxviii. 19.) It follows from what has now been said that the chief aspect in which the form of the Son of Man is presented to us in St. Matthew's Gospel is that of the King who fulfilled the hopes of Israel—a King, not tyrannous and proud, but meek and lowly; coming, not with chariots and horses, but on an ass's colt, bearing the cross before He wears the crown, and yet receiving, even in unconscious infancy, tokens of His sovereignty, and in manhood giving proof of that sovereignty by His power over nature, and men, and the forces of the unseen world. Seen from this point of view, each portion of the Gospel is part of the great portraiture of the ideal King. The Sermon on the Mount, while it is, in part, the voice of the true Teacher, the true Rabbi, as contrasted with those who were unworthy of that title, is yet also the proclamation by the King, who speaks, not as the scribes, but as one having authority, of His royal Law (Jas. ii. 8), of the conditions of His kingdom (Matt vii. 29). The parables of chaps. xiii. and xxv. are brought together with a fulness and profusion found in no other Gospel, because they bring before us, each of them, some special aspect of that kingdom. If he alone of the Evangelists mentions, as coming from our Lord's lips, the word for the Christian society (*Ecclesia*) which, when the Gospels were written, was in universal use, we may see in the care that he took to record those few words as bearing witness to the true relation of that society to its King and Lord, his sense of the reality of the kingdom. Christ had built that Church on Himself as the Eternal Rock, and the gates of hell should not prevail against it (Matt. xvi. 18). Where it was, there He would be, even to the end of the world (Matt. xxviii. 20). The play of fancy which led the men of a later age to connect the four Gospels with the four cherubic symbols may have had much in it that was arbitrary and capricious, but it was not altogether wrong when, with a uniform consent, it identified the Gospel of St. Matthew with the form that had the face of a man (Ezek. i. 10; Rev. iv. 7). Assuming the cherubic forms to represent primarily the great manifestations of Divine wisdom (see Note below) as seen in nature, that "face of a man" testified to the seers who looked on it that there was a Will and a Purpose which men could partly comprehend as working after the manner of their own. Interpreted by the fuller revelation of God in Christ, it taught them that the Son of Man, who had been made a little lower than the angels, was crowned with glory and honour, sitting on the right hand of the Ancient of days (Dan. viii. 13), Lord and King over the world of nature and the world of men, and yet delighting above all in the praises that flowed from the mouth of babes and sucklings (Ps. viii. 2; Matt. xxi. 16).

## EXCURSUS ON THE CHERUBIC SYMBOLISM OF THE GOSPELS.

It will, perhaps, convey information which will be welcome to many readers, if I lay before them a brief survey of the mystical symbolism above referred to. I do not pretend that it helps us much in the interpretation of the Gospels. I do not believe that the cherubic forms were primarily typical of anything but the divine attributes of majesty and strength as seen in the forms of animal creation. A like symbolism meets us, it will be remembered, obviously with that meaning, in the winged bulls and lions, the men with wings and heads of eagles, that are seen in the monuments of Assyria, with which the prophet who spent his exile on the banks of Chebar could not fail to have been familiar. But the history of such symbolism, if it lies outside the limits of the work of the interpreter, has yet a special interest of its own, and has exercised so wide an influence on Christian art and poetry, that the reader of the Gospels should hardly remain ignorant of its several stages. The first description that meets us is that in Ezek. i. 10. Here they are described, not as "cherubim," but as "living creatures." "As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle." They had each four faces and four wings, and they shone "like burning coals of fire," and like "the appearance of lamps." There were wheels with them, and "the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels," and they moved altogether, and above them was a sapphire throne, and round it the brightness of the rainbow, and on the throne the "appearance of a man." In chap. x. the prophet has another like vision, seen as in the courts of the Temple, but there is a suggestive change in the description: "The first face was the face of a cherub" (this taking the place of the ox), "and the second face was the face of a man, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle;" and he adds, what is in every way significant, that he then recognised, what he had apparently not perceived before, the identity of the vision at Chebar with the cherubim of the Temple (Ezek. x. 20, 21). The symbols remained mysterious, uninterpreted, unnoticed, till the visions of the Apocalypse, in which St. John brought together things new and old from all previous Apocalypses. We find in his symbolic picture of the unseen world the same mysterious forms. "In the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts" (better, four *living creatures*, as in Ezekiel), "full of eyes before and behind; and the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle." It was natural that this reproduction of the symbolic imagery should attract the attention of Christian writers, and equally natural that they should endeavour to find a meaning for it that came within the horizon of their own associations. And when the Church found itself in possession of the four Gospels, and of those alone, as recognised authentic records of the life and teaching of its Lord, when men were finding in them a mystic correspondence with the four elements and the four winds and the four rivers of Paradise, it was natural that the number of the living creatures also should seem to them to have been intended to answer to that of the four precious and sacred books. It is significant, however, of the somewhat arbitrary character of the symbolism that its application has not been uniform. The earlier writers, beginning with Irenæus (iii. 11), assign the lion, as the emblem of kingly majesty, to St. John; the calf, as signifying sacrificial or priestly attributes, to St. Luke; the man, as presenting the humanity of Christ, to St. Matthew; the eagle, as answering to the prophetic announcement with which his Gospel opens, to St. Mark; and this is reproduced by Juvencus, a Latin poet, *circ.* A.D. 334. The Pseudo-Athanasius (*Synopsis Script.*) assigns the man to St. Matthew, the calf to St. Mark, the lion to St. Luke, the eagle to St. John, but without assigning reasons. In Sedulius, a Latin poet of the fifth century, what has since been the received distribution of the symbols makes its first appearance. It was quickly accepted, as having a greater measure of fitness than the earlier interpretations, was adopted by Augustine (*De Consens. Evang.* i. 6) and Jerome (*Prœm. in Matt.*), appears in the early mosaics of the basilicas at Rome and Ravenna, and has since been current, to the entire exclusion of the earlier view. It finds, perhaps, its noblest expression in the Latin hymn of Adam of St. Victor, in the twelfth century. It will be well, it is believed, to give this both in the original and in a translation. The whole hymn may be found in Archbishop Trench's *Latin Poetry*, p. 67.

Supra cœlos dum conscendit
Summi Patris comprehendit
Natum ante sæcula;
Pellens nubem nostræ molis
Intuetur jubar solis
Joannes in aquilâ.

Est leonis rugientis
Marco vultus, resurgentis
Quo claret potentia:
Voce Patris excitatus,
Surgit Christus, laureatus
Immortali gloriâ.

Os humanum est Matthæi,
In humanâ formâ Dei
Dictantis prosapiam;
Cujus genus sic contexit
Quod à stirpe David exit
Per carnis materiam.

Ritus bovis Lucæ datur
In quâ formâ figuratur
Nova Christus hostia:
Arâ crucis mansuetus
Hic mactatur, sicque vetus
Transit observantia.

Paradisi hic fluenta
Nova fluunt sacramenta
Quæ descendunt cœlitus:
His quadrigis deportatur
Mundo Deus, sublimatur
Istis arca vectibus.

See, far above the starry height,
Beholding, with unclouded sight,
The brightness of the sun,
John doth, as eagle swift, appear,
Still gazing on the vision clear
Of Christ, the Eternal Son.

To Mark belongs the lion's form,
With voice loud-roaring as the storm,
His risen Lord to own;
Called by the Father from the grave,
As victor crowned, and strong to save,
We see Him on His throne.

The face of man is Matthew's share,
Who shows the Son of Man doth bear
Man's form with might divine,
And tracks the line of high descent,
Through which the Word with flesh was blent,
In David's kingly line.

To Luke the ox belongs, for he,
More clearly than the rest, doth see
Christ as the victim slain;
Upon the cross, as altar true,
The bleeding, spotless Lamb we view,
And see all else is vain.

So from their source in Paradise
The four mysterious rivers rise,
And life to earth is given:
On these four wheels and staves, behold,
God and His ark are onward rolled,
High above earth in Heaven.

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW.

CHAPTER I.—(1) The book of the generation[a] of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. (2) Abraham[b] begat Isaac; and Isaac[c] begat Jacob; and Jacob[d] begat Judas and his brethren; (3) and Judas[e] begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares[f] begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram; (4) and Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon; (5) and Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth;

f Ruth 4. 18.
a Luke 3. 23.
b Gen. 21. 3.
c Gen. 25. 26.
d Gen. 29. 35.
e Gen. 38. 27, &c.

(1) **The book of the generation.**—The opening words of the Gospel show that it is written by a Jew for Jewish readers. They are an essentially Hebrew formula (as in Gen. v. 1), and were applied chiefly though not exclusively (Gen. xxxvii. 2) to genealogies such as that which follows here.

**Jesus Christ.**—The collocation of names was not so much a thing of course when St. Matthew wrote as it now seems to us. There were many who bore the name of Jesus—*e.g.*, Jesus the son of Sirach, Jesus surnamed Justus (Col. iv. 11), possibly even Jesus Bar-abbas (Matt. xxvii. 17). It was necessary to state that the genealogy that followed was that of Jesus the Messiah, the true "anointed" of the Lord.

**The son of David.**—This, of course, was added as the most popular of all the names of the expected Christ, owned alike by scribes and Rabbis (Matt. xxii. 42), by children (Matt. xxi. 9), and by the poor (Matt. xv. 22; xx. 30).

**The son of Abraham.**—There is no reason to think that this was ever a specially Messianic title. If there is any special significance in its occurrence here, it is as emphasising that which the Messiah had in common with other Israelites. He was thus as a brother to them all, even to the despised publican (Luke xix. 9), as being the seed of Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed (Gen. xxii. 18). The former thought appears in another book specially written, like this Gospel, for Hebrews—"On the seed of Abraham he layeth hold" (Heb. ii. 16).

(2) The omission of the names of Ishmael and Esau is explained by the fact, that they were not only not in the line of succession, but were outside the covenant with Abraham—"In Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Gen. xxi. 12); and Esau had forfeited both the birthright and the blessing. The brethren of Judah are named, on the other hand, because all who were descended from them had an equal interest in the Messiah.

(3) **Thamar.**—The occurrence of the names of women in genealogies was the exception rather than the rule among the Jews; but there are instances enough in the Old Testament (*e.g.*, Keturah, Gen. xxv. 1; the wives of Esau, Gen. xxxvi. 10; Timna, Gen. xxxvi. 22; Mehetabel, Gen. xxxvi. 39; Azubah, the wife of Caleb, 1 Chron. ii. 18; Achsa, his daughter, 1 Chron. ii. 49; and many others) to make the insertion of such names here quite natural, even without assuming any distinct purpose. It was enough that the women were historically notable. In the case of Thamar there were precedents enough for such an honourable mention. In the days of Ruth she was as much the heroine of the tribe of Judah as Rachel and Leah were of all Israel, and her name came into the formula of nuptial benediction (Ruth iv. 12). It appears also in the genealogies of 1 Chron. ii. 4. It would appear from the language of the Talmud as if the Jews looked on her strange and to us revolting history with quite other feelings. To them she was as one who, at the risk of shame, and, it might be, death, had preserved the line of Judah from destruction, and "therefore was counted worthy to be the mother of kings and prophets." The mention of Zara, though not in the line of succession, follows the precedent of 1 Chron. ii. 47.

(4) **Naasson,** or Nahshon, the brother of Elisheba the wife of Aaron, was, at the time of the Exodus, the "prince (or captain) of the children" of Judah (Num. i. 7; ii. 3; 1 Chron. ii. 10). A Jewish legend made him the first to enter the waters of the Red Sea.

(5) **Rachab.**—The Old Testament records are silent as to the marriage of Salmon with the harlot of Jericho. When they were compiled it was probably thought of as a blot rather than a glory; but the fact may have been preserved in the traditions of the house of David. It has been conjectured that Salmon may have been one of the two unnamed spies whose lives were saved by Rahab, when he was doing the work which Caleb had done before him. The mention of Rahab in Jas. ii. 25, Heb. xi. 31, shows that her fame had risen at the time when St. Matthew wrote. The Talmud legends, curiously enough, reckon eight prophets among her descendants, including Jeremiah and Baruch, but not any of the line of David. Assuming the connection between St. Matthew and St. James, which has been shown in the Introduction to this Gospel to be probable, the mention of Rahab by both takes its place as an interesting coincidence.

**Booz.**—The succession is the same as in Ruth iv. 21. The new fact of Salmon's marriage explains some of the features of that history—the readiness with which the sons of Naomi marry two women of the Moabites; the absence of any repugnance to such a union on the part of Boaz; perhaps the reference to Tamar in the benediction of Ruth iv. 12. Salmon would seem to have been the first of the house to have had land at Bethlehem (1 Chron. ii. 54), and to have gained this in part through his adoption into the family of Caleb.

and Obed begat Jesse; (6) and Jesse[a] begat David the king; and David[b] the king begat Solomon of her *that had been the wife of* Urias; (7) and Solomon[c] begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa; (8) and Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias; (9) and Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias; (10) and Ezekias[d] begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias; (11) and [1]Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon: (12) and after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias[e] begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel; (13) and Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; (14) and Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; (15) and Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob; (16) and Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

(17) So all the generations from Abraham to David *are* fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon *are* fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ *are* fourteen generations.

(18) Now the birth[f] of Jesus was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they

[a] 1 Sam. 16. 1; 17. 12.

[b] 2 Sam. 12. 24. 1 Chron. 3. 5.

[c] 1 Chron. 3. 10.

[d] 2 Kings 20. 21; 1 Chron. 3. 13.

[1] Some read, *Josias begat Jakim, and Jakim begat Jechonias.*

[f] Luke 1. 27.

[e] 1 Chron. 3. 16. 17.

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(6) **The wife of Urias.**—Once again we have the mention of a woman who at least played a memorable part in the history of Israel. As this is the last of such names in the genealogy, it may be well to deal with the question whether any special purpose can be traced in the selection, beyond that of noting points of interest. Nothing can carry us beyond probable conjectures; but, within those limits, it is at least suggestive that all the names are those of women who, either as of heathen origin (Bathsheba, like her husband, was probably a Hittite), or by personal guilt, were as those whom the strict judgment of the Pharisee excluded from his fellowship. St. Matthew may have meant men to draw the inference that, as these women were not excluded from the honour of being in the Messiah's line of ancestry, so others like them would not be shut out from fellowship with His kingdom.

(9) **Ozias.**—Ozias is, of course, the Uzziah of the Old Testament. Three names are omitted between Joram and this king—viz., Ahaziah, Joash, Amaziah. Apparently the motive for the omission was simply the desire of bringing the names in each period into which the genealogy is divided to the arbitrary standard of fourteen. Possibly, however, as it was thus necessary to omit three names, the choice of these may have been determined by the fact that they belonged to the time of Athaliah's disastrous influence in the history of the monarchy of Judah. We learn from this fact that the words "A begat B" are not to be taken literally, but are simply an expression of the fact of succession with or without intermediate links.

(11) **Jechonias and his brethren.**—Here again there is a missing link in the name of Eliakim, or Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 34). Jeconiah was therefore the grandson of Josiah. The alternative reading mentioned in the margin rests on very slight authority, and was obviously the insertion of some later scribe, to meet the difficulty. The word "brethren" was probably meant to include Mattaniah or Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, who was the son of Josiah, and therefore uncle to Jechoniah.

(12) **Jechonias begat Salathiel.**—We come here into a cluster of genealogical difficulties. (1) The natural impression left by Jer. xxii. 30 is that Coniah (or Jechonias) died childless, or, at least, left no descendants who came to rule as Zerubbabel did; (2) In the genealogy given by St. Luke (iii. 27), Salathiel is named as the son of Neri; (3) In 1 Chron. iii. 17—19, Salathiel is the son of Assir, the son of Jeconiah, and Zerubbabel the son of Pedaiah, the brother of Salathiel. It is not easy to see our way through these difficulties; but the most probable solution is that Assir was the only son of Jeconiah, and died without issue before his father; that the line of Solomon thus came to an end, and that the descendants of Nathan, another son of David, took their place in the succession, and were reckoned, as by adoption, as the sons of the last survivor of the other line. The practice is, it may be noted, analogous to that which prevails among Indian princes, and in other Eastern nations. (Comp. Note on Luke iii. 23—38.)

(17) The arrangement into three triads of fourteen generations each was obviously in the nature of a *memoria technica*. The periods embraced by the three groups were, it may be noted, of very unequal length; and the actual omission of names in one of them, makes it possible that the others may have been treated in the same way.

(1) From the birth of Abraham to the birth of David, taking the dates supplied by the received chronology of the Old Testament. B.C. 1996—1085.

(2) From the birth of David to the Captivity. B.C. 1085—588.

(3) From the Captivity to the birth of Jesus. B.C. 588—4.

There remains the further question, how we are to reconcile the genealogy given by St. Matthew with that given by St. Luke (iii. 23—38). This will, it is believed, be best dealt with in a short *Excursus* in the Notes on that Gospel. Here it may be sufficient to note that the difference between the two is, at least, strong presumptive evidence that neither of the two Evangelists had seen the record of the other. It is otherwise hardly conceivable that the element of difficulty which these differences involve should have been introduced by one or the other without a word of explanation. Each, it may be presumed, copied a document which he found, and the two documents were drawn up on a different plan as to the ideas of succession recognised in each of them.

(18) St. Matthew, for some reason or other, omits all mention of what St. Luke relates very fully, as to the events that preceded the birth of Jesus and brought about the birth at Bethlehem. Either he had not access to any document full and trustworthy, like that which St. Luke made use of, or, as every writer of

came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. (19) Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. (20) But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. (21) And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS:[a] for he shall save his people from their sins.

[a] Luke 1. 31.

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history must fix a beginning more or less arbitrary, he found his starting-point in those facts which took a foremost place in what bore upon the fulfilment of Messianic prophecy. It has been said that the impression left by his narrative is so far misleading, that it suggests the idea that there was no earlier connection with Nazareth than that which we find in ii. 23. It must, however, be remembered that even St. Luke's narrative tells us nothing as to the original home of Joseph, and that one who himself belonged to Bethlehem, as being of the house and lineage of David, might, without any improbability, be betrothed to a maiden of Nazareth, probably of the same lineage. Of the earlier life of Mary the Canonical Gospels tell us nothing, and the Apocryphal Gospels (though they have furnished the groundwork of the treatment of the subject by Christian art—see Notes on Luke i. 27) are too legendary to be relied on. The omission of any mention of her parents suggests the idea of orphanhood, possibly under the guardianship of Joseph. The non-appearance of Joseph in the records of our Lord's ministry, makes it probable that he died in the interval between the visit to the Temple of Luke ii. 42 and the preaching of the Baptist, and that he was older than Mary. Both were poor; Joseph worked as a carpenter (Matt. xiii. 55), Mary offered the cheaper sacrifice of "two young pigeons" (Luke ii. 24). They had no house at Bethlehem (Luke ii. 7). Mary was related to Elizabeth, the wife of Zechariah the priest (Luke i. 36). Both were within the circle of those who cherished Messianic expectations, and to whom, therefore, the announcement that these expectations were to be fulfilled would come as the answer to their hopes and prayers.

**Was espoused to Joseph.**—Betrothal, among the Jews, was a formal ceremony, the usual symbolic act being, from patriarchal times, the gift of a ring and other jewels (Gen. xxiv. 53). The interval between betrothal and marriage was of uncertain length, but among the Jews of our Lord's time was commonly for a whole year in the case of maidens. During that time the bride-elect remained in her own home, and did not see the bridegroom till he came to fetch her to his own house. All communications in the meantime were conducted through "the friend of the bridegroom" (John iii. 29).

**Of the Holy Ghost.**—To Joseph and those who heard the new report from him, prior to the more precise truths revealed by our Lord's teaching, the words would at least suggest a divine creative energy, quickening supernaturally the germ of life, as in Gen. i. 2, Ps. civ. 30.

(19) **Joseph her husband.**—The word was applied with strict accuracy from the moment of betrothal onwards.

**Being a just man . . . .**—The glimpse given us into the character of Joseph is one of singular tenderness and beauty. To him, conscious of being of the house of David, and cherishing Messianic hopes, what he heard would seem to come as blighting those hopes. He dared not, as a "righteous" man, take to himself one who seemed thus to have sinned. But love and pity alike hindered him from pressing the law, which made death by stoning the punishment of such a sin (Deut. xxii. 21), or even from publicly breaking off the marriage on the ground of the apparent guilt. There remained the alternative, which the growing frequency of divorce made easy, of availing himself of a "writ of divorcement," which did not necessarily specify the ground of repudiation, except in vague language implying disagreement (Matt. xix. 3). Thus the matter would be settled quietly without exposure. The "bill of divorcement" was as necessary for the betrothed as for those who were fully man and wife.

(20) **While he thought on these things.**—The words imply a conflict, a perplexity; and the words of the angel came as the solution of his doubts.

**In a dream.**—From the Jewish point of view, dreams were the received channels of divine communications to the aged, open visions in the state of ecstasy to the young (Joel ii. 28). This, at least, falls in with what has been inferred as to Joseph's age.

**Joseph, thou son of David.**—The latter words were, in the highest degree, significant. His character as the heir of Messianic hopes, which was indeed at the root of his fears, was fully recognised. That which he was bidden to do would not be inconsistent with that character, and would bring about the fulfilment of those hopes.

**Thy wife.**—Here again stress is laid on the fact that Mary was already entitled to that name, and had done nothing to forfeit it.

**Conceived.**—Better, perhaps, *begotten.*

(21) **Thou shalt call his name Jesus.**—There is nothing strange in this being to Joseph the first knowledge of the name, which St. Luke tells us (Luke i. 31) had been previously imparted to Mary. The customs of the Jews were, as we have seen, against any communications between the bride and bridegroom during the period of betrothal, and the facts of the case (including Mary's visit to Elizabeth) would make it more improbable than ever.

The name Jesus was one full of meaning, but it was not as yet a specially sacred name. In its Old Testament form of Jehoshua (Num. xiii. 16), Joshua, or Jeshua (Num. xiv. 6; Neh. viii. 17), it meant "Jehovah is salvation;" and the change of the name of the captain of Israel from Hoshea, which did not include the divine name, to the form which gave this full significance (Num. xiii. 16) had made it the expression of the deepest faith of the people. After the return from Babylon it received a new prominence in connection with the high priest Joshua, the son of Josedech (Hagg. i. 1; Zech. iii. 1), and appears in its Greek form in Jesus the father, and again in the son, of Sirach. In the New Testament itself we find it borne by others (see Note on verse 1). It had not been directly associated, however, with Messianic hopes, and the intimation that it was to be the name of the Christ gave a new character to men's thoughts of the kingdom. Not conquest, but "salvation"—deliverance, not from

(22) Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, (23) Behold, a virgin shall be with child,[a] and shall bring forth a son, and [1]they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

(24) Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: (25) and knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

[a] Isa. 7. 14.

[1] Or, *his name shall be called.*

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human enemies only or chiefly, nor from the penalties of sin, but from the sins themselves. As spoken by the angel to the dreamer it was the answer to prayers and hopes, going beyond the hope, and purifying it from earthly thoughts. As recorded by the Evangelist it was a witness that he had been taught the true nature of the kingdom of the Christ.

(22) **All this was done.**—The Evangelist pauses in his narrative to introduce his own comment. He saw in what he relates that which answered to the apparent meaning of prophetic words. He could not possibly regard the agreement as a chance coincidence; and, as chance was excluded, there was no alternative but purpose. The prophecy and the event entered both of them into a divine plan.

(23) **Behold, a virgin shall be with child.**—It is not so easy for us, as it seemed to St. Matthew, to trace in Isaiah's words the meaning which he assigns to them. As we find them in a literal translation from the Hebrew, the words of Isa. vii. 14 run thus:—"Behold, the maiden conceives and bears a son, and calls his name Immanuel." If we read these words in connection with the facts recorded in that chapter—the alliance of the kings of Syria and Israel against Judah, Isaiah's promise of deliverance, and his offer of a sign in attestation of his promise, the hypocritical refusal of that offer by Ahaz, who preferred resting on his plan of an alliance with Assyria—their natural meaning seems to be this:—The prophet either points to some maiden of marriageable years, or speaks as if he saw one in his vision of the future, and says that the sign shall be that she shall conceive and bear a *son* (the fulfilment of *this* prediction constituting the sign, without assuming a supernatural conception), and that she should give to that son a name which would embody the true hope of Israel—"God is with us." The early years of that child should be nourished, not on the ordinary food of a civilised and settled population, but on the clotted milk and wild honey, which were (as we see in the case of the Baptist) the food of the dwellers in the wilderness, and which appear in verses 21, 22, as part of the picture of the desolation to which the country would be reduced by the Assyrian invasion. But in spite of that misery, even before the child should attain to the age at which he could refuse the evil and choose the good, the land of those whom Ahaz and his people were then dreading should be "forsaken of both her kings." So understood, all is natural and coherent. It must be added, however, that this child was associated by Isaiah with no common hopes. The land of Israel was to be his land (viii. 8). It is hardly possible not to connect his name with "the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father" of Isa. ix. 6; with the Rod and Branch of the Stem of Jesse that was to grow up and present the picture of an ideal king (xi. 1—9). All that we speak of as the Messianic hopes of the prophet clustered round the child Immanuel. Those hopes were, as we know, not fulfilled as he had expected. They remained for a later generation to feed on with yearning desire. But, so far as we know, they did not suggest to any Jewish interpreter the thought of a birth altogether supernatural. That thought did not enter into the popular expectations of the Messiah. It was indeed foreign to the prevailing feeling of the Jews as to the holiness of marriage and all that it involved, and would have commended itself to none but a small section of the more austere Essenes. St. Matthew, however, having to record the facts of our Lord's birth, and reading Isaiah with a mind full of the new truths which rested on the Incarnation, could not fail to be struck with the correspondence between the facts and the words which he here quotes, and which in the Greek translation were even more emphatic than in the Hebrew, and saw in them a prophecy that had at last been fulfilled. He does not say whether he looked on it as a conscious or unconscious prophecy. He was sure that the coincidence was not casual.

The view thus given deals, it is believed fairly, with both parts of the problem. If to some extent it modifies what till lately was the current view as to the meaning of Isaiah's prediction, it meets by anticipation the objection that the narrative was a mythical outgrowth of the prophecy as popularly received. It would be truer to say that it was the facts narrated that first gave occasion to this interpretation of the prophecy. St. Luke, who narrates the facts with far greater fulness than St. Matthew, does so without any reference to the words of the prophet.

**Emmanuel.**—As spoken by Isaiah, the name, like that of The Lord our Righteousness, applied by Jeremiah not only to the future Christ (Jer. xxiii. 6), but to Jerusalem (xxxiii. 16), did not necessarily mean more than that "God was with His people," protecting, guiding, ruling them. The Church of Christ has, however, rightly followed the Evangelist in seeing in it the witness to a Presence more direct, personal, immediate than any that had been known before. It was more than a watchword and a hope—more than a "*nomen et omen*"—and had become a divine reality.

(24) **Took unto him his wife.**—These few words cover a great deal. They imply the formal ratification of the betrothal before witnesses; the benediction by a priest; the marriage-feast; the removal from the house that had hitherto been her home to that of Joseph. They imply also that what had seemed evidence of guilt among the neighbours of that home, brought with it to Joseph's mind no ground for blame. To them, if they were not told the history, and it is not probable that they were, it must have been deemed an act of exceptional mercy and forbearance. The reverence implied in what the next verse records must have roused their wonder.

(25) **Till she had brought forth her firstborn son.**—The word "firstborn" is not found in the best MSS. The questions which meet us here, unprofitable as they are, cannot be altogether passed over. What bearing have these words on the widespread belief of Christendom in the perpetual maidenhood of Mary? On what grounds does that belief itself rest?

CHAPTER II.—(1) Now when Jesus[a] was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, (2) saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

The fourth year before the common account called Anno Domini.

[a] Luke 2. 6.

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(1) Nothing can be inferred directly from St. Matthew's phrase "till she had brought forth" as to what followed after the birth. The writer's purpose is obviously to emphasise the absence of all that might interfere with the absolutely supernatural character of the birth itself. (2) Nothing can be inferred with certainty from the mention of our Lord's "brethren" in xii. 46 (see Note there), and elsewhere. They may have been children of Joseph by a former marriage, or by what was known as a levirate marriage with the widow of a deceased brother, under the law of Deut. xxv. 5, Matt. xxii. 24, or children by adoption, or cousins included under the general name of brethren. (3) The fact that the mother of our Lord found a home with the beloved disciple (John xix. 27) and not with any of the "brethren" points, as far as it goes, to their not being her own children, but it does not go far enough to warrant any positive assertion. Scripture therefore supplies no *data* for any decision on either side, nor does any tradition that can really be called primitive. The reverence for virginity as compared with marriage in the patristic and mediæval Church made the "ever-virgin" to be one of the received titles of the mother of the Lord. The reaction of natural feeling against that reverence led men in earlier and later times to assert the opposite. Every commentator is influenced consciously or unconsciously by his leanings in this or that direction. And so the matter must rest.

## II.

(1) **In the days of Herod the king.**—The death of Herod took place in the year of Rome A.U.C. 750, just before the Passover. This year coincided with what in our common chronology would be B.C. 4—so that we have to recognise the fact that our common reckoning is erroneous, and to fix B.C. 5 or 4 as the date of the Nativity.

No facts recorded either in St. Matthew or St. Luke throw much light on the season of the birth of Christ. The flocks and shepherds in the open field indicate spring rather than winter. The received day, December 25th, was not kept as a festival in the East till the time of Chrysostom, and was then received as resting on the tradition of the Roman Church. It has been conjectured, with some probability, that the time was chosen in order to substitute the purified joy of a Christian festival for the license of the Saturnalia which were kept at that season.

The time of the arrival of the wise men was probably (we cannot say more) after the Presentation in the Temple of Luke ii. 22. The appearance of the star coincided with the birth. The journey from any part of the region vaguely called the East would occupy at least several weeks.

**Wise men from the east.**—The Greek word is Magi. That name appears in Jer. xxxix. 3, 13, in the name Rab-Mag, "The chief of the Magi." Herodotus speaks of them as a priestly caste of the Medes, known as interpreters of dreams (I. 101, 120). Among the Greeks the word was commonly applied with a tone of scorn to the impostors who claimed supernatural knowledge, and *magic* was in fact the art of the Magi, and so the word was commonly used throughout the Roman world when the New Testament was written. Simon Magus is Simon the sorcerer. There was however, as side by side with this, a recognition of the higher ideas of which the word was capable, and we can hardly think that the writer of the Gospel would have used it in its lower sense. With him, as with Plato, the Magi were thought of as observers of the heavens, students of the secrets of Nature. Where they came from we cannot tell. The name was too widely spread at this time to lead us to look with certainty to its original home in Persia, and that country was to the North rather than the East of Palestine. The watching of the heavens implied in the narrative belonged to Chaldea rather than Persia. The popular legends that they were three in number, and that they were kings, that they represented the three great races of the sons of Noah, and were named Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthasar, are simply apocryphal additions, originating probably in dramatic representations, and perpetuated by Christian art.

(2) **Where is he . . ?**—The Magi express here the feeling which the Roman historians, Tacitus and Suetonius, tell us sixty or seventy years later had been for a long time very widely diffused. Everywhere throughout the East men were looking for the advent of a great king who was to rise from among the Jews. The expectation partly rested on such Messianic prophecies of Isaiah as chap. ix., xi., partly on the later predictions of Daniel vii. It had fermented in the minds of men, heathens as well as Jews, and would have led them to welcome Jesus as the Christ had He come in accordance with their expectations. As it was, He came precisely as they did *not* expect Him, shattering their earthly hopes to pieces, and so they did not receive Him.

**We have seen his star in the east.**—Here again we enter on questions which we cannot answer. Was the star (as Kepler conjectured) natural—the conjuncture of the planets Jupiter and Saturn appearing as a single star of special brightness—or supernatural; visible to all beholders, or to the Magi only? Astronomy is against the first view, by showing that the planets at their nearest were divided by the apparent diameter of the moon. The last hypothesis introduces a fresh miracle without a shadow of authority from Scripture. We must be content to remain in ignorance. We know too little of the astrology of that period to determine what star might or might not seem to those who watched the heavens as the precursor of a great king. Any star (as *e.g.*, that which was connected with the birth of Cæsar) might, under given rules of art, acquire a new significance. Stories, not necessarily legends, of the appearances of such stars gathered round the births of Alexander the Great and Mithridates as well as Cæsar. The language of Balaam as to "the Star that was to rise out of Jacob" (Num. xxiv. 17) implied the existence of such an association of thoughts then, and tended to perpetuate it. As late as the reign of Hadrian, the rebel chief who headed the insurrection of the Jews took the name of Bar-cochab, the "Son of a Star." Without building too much on uncertain *data*, we may, however, at least believe that the "wise men" were Gentiles. They do not ask for "*our* king," but for the king of the Jews; and yet, though Gentiles, they were sharers in the Messianic hopes of the Jews. They came to worship,

(3) When Herod the king had heard *these things*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. (4) And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. (5) And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judæa: for thus it is written by the prophet, (6) And thou Bethlehem,[a] *in* the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule[1] my people Israel.

(7) Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. (8) And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found *him*, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. (9) When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. (10) When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

[a] Mic. 5. 2; John 7. 42.

[1] Or, *feed.*

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*i.e.*, to do homage, as subjects of the new-born King. They were watchers of the signs of the heavens, and when they saw what they interpreted as the sign that the King had come, they undertook a four months' journey (if they came from Babylon, Ezra vii. 9; more, if they came from Persia), partly, perhaps, led by the position of the star (though this is not stated), partly naturally making their way to Jerusalem, as certain to hear there some tidings of the Jewish King.

(3) **Herod the king.**—When the Magi reached Jerusalem, the air was thick with fears and rumours, The old king (the title had been given by the Roman Senate in B.C. 40) was drawing to the close of his long and blood-stained reign. Two years before he had put to death, on a charge of treason, his two sons by Mariamne, his best-loved wife, through sheer jealousy of the favour with which the people looked on them. At the time when this history opens, his eldest son, Antipater, was under condemnation. The knowledge that priests and people were alike looking for the "consolation of Israel" (Luke ii. 25, 38), the whispers that told that such a consolation had come, the uneasiness excited in the people by the "taxing" in which he had been forced to acquiesce, all these were elements of disquietude prior to the arrival of the Magi, and turned the last days of the Idumæan prince (his subjects never forgot his origin) into a time of frenzied and cruel suspicion. The excitement naturally spread throughout the city.

(4) **The chief priests and scribes.**—The chief priests were probably the heads of the twenty-four courses into which the sons of Aaron were divided (2 Chron. xxiii. 8; Luke i. 5), but the term may have included those who had, though only for a time, held the office of high priest. The "scribes" were the interpreters of the Law, casuists and collectors of the traditions of the Elders, for the most part Pharisees. The meeting thus convened was not necessarily a formal meeting of the Sanhedrim or Great Council, and may have been only as a Committee of Notables called together for a special purpose. With a characteristic subtlety, as if trying to gauge the strength of their Messianic hopes, Herod acts as if he himself shared them, and asks where the Christ, the expected Messiah, the "anointed" of the Lord (Ps. ii. 2; xlv. 7; lxxxix. 20) was to be born.

(5) **In Bethlehem of Judæa.**—The words of the people in John vii. 42 show the same belief thirty years later. The Targum, or Jewish paraphrase, of Micah v. 2, inserts the very words, "Out of thee the Messiah shall come."

(6) **And thou Bethlehem . . .**—The Evangelist is not quoting the prophecy of Micah himself, but recording it as it was quoted by the scribes. This in part explains the fact that he does not give either the version of the LXX., or a more accurate rendering of the Hebrew, but a free paraphrase. As the Targum, just referred to, belongs to this period, it is perfectly possible that the writer of it may have been one of the Council. At any rate, his Messianic reference of the passage was likely to be dominant. The chief difference for the English reader to note is, that the Hebrew gives "thou art little among the thousands (*i.e.*, as in Judg. vi. 15, the families or clans) of Judah;" the version given by St. Matthew, "thou art not the least among the princes." The prophet contrasts the outward insignificance with the spiritual greatness. The paraphrast sees the outward transfigured by the glory of the spiritual. So again the simpler "out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel" is paraphrased into "out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule (*e.g.*, feed, as a shepherd) my people Israel." The fact that the scribes stopped, and did not go on to the words that told of the Ruler as one "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting," may have arisen either from an unwillingness to bring that aspect of the expected Christ before the mind of Herod, or, possibly, from an equal unwillingness to face it themselves.

(7) **When he had privily called.**—True to his nature to the last—himself probably a believer in astrology, and haunted by fears of what the star portended—the king's next measure is to ascertain the limits of his danger. The English "what time the star appeared" is not quite accurate. Literally, *the time of the star that was appearing*—*i.e.*, at what time the star, which was still visible (ver. 9), had first appeared.

**Enquired of them diligently.**—Better, *ascertained exactly.*

(8) Bethlehem was but a short six miles from Jerusalem. "Diligently," better, as before, *exactly.* So far as the mission became known, it would impress the people with the belief that he too shared their hopes, and was ready to pay his homage to the new-born King.

(9) **Which they saw . . .**—The words would seem to imply that they started in the evening, and, as they started, saw the star in the direction of Bethlehem. In popular language it served to guide them, and so led them on. We need not suppose that they found the child whom they sought in the "manger" described by St. Luke. There had been time for the crowds that had been gathered by the census to disperse, and Joseph

(11) And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented[1] unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. (12) And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

(13) And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. (14) When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: (15) and was there

[1] Or, *offered.*

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and Mary may have found a house in which they could lodge. The expectations that connected Bethlehem with the coming of the Christ might naturally lead them to remain there at least for a season.

(11) **Opened their treasures.**—The word points to caskets, or chests, which they had brought with them.

**Gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.**—These were natural enough as the traditional gifts of homage to a ruler. Compare the gifts sent by Jacob to Joseph (Gen. xliii. 11), and Ps. xlv. 8, for the myrrh and spices; Ps. lxxii. 15, for the gold; Isa. lx. 6, for gold and incense. The patristic interpretation of the gifts as significant—the gold, of kingly power; the incense, of Divinity; the myrrh, of death and embalmment—interesting as it is, cannot be assumed to have been definitely present to the mind of the Evangelist. It is noticeable that there is here no mention of Joseph. Looking to his prominence in St. Matthew's narrative, we must assume that his absence on the night of their arrival was accidental.

(12) **Being warned of God.**—Following the order of events in our minds, it seems probable that after their homage on the evening of their arrival, they retired, possibly to the "inn" of Bethlehem, and were then, in their sleep, warned not to return to Jerusalem the following day, but to make their way to the fords of Jordan, and so to escape from the tyrant's jealous pursuit. So ends all that we know of the visit of the Magi. St. Matthew, writing for Hebrews, recorded it apparently as testifying to the kingly character of Jesus. Christendom, however, has rightly seen in it a yet deeper significance, and the "wise men" have been regarded as the first-fruits of the outlying heathen world, the earnest of the future ingathering. Among all the festivals that enter into the Christmas cycle, none has made so deep an impression on Christian feeling, poetry, and art as the Epiphany, or "Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles." The arrangement which places that festival at an interval of twelve days only from the Nativity is purely arbitrary.

We need not ignore the fact that the narrative has been treated by many critics as purely mythical. Those who so regard it, however, with hardly an exception, extend their theory to every supernatural element in the Gospel history; and so this is but a fragmentary issue, part of a far wider question, with which this is not the place to deal. The very least that can be said is that there are no special notes of a legendary character in this narrative which could warrant our regarding it as less trustworthy than the rest of the Gospel. Why St. Matthew only records this fact, and St. Luke only the visit of the shepherds, is a question which we may ask, but cannot answer. The two narratives are, at any rate, in no way whatever irreconcilable.

(13) **The angel.**—Better, *an angel.* The interval of time between the departure of the Magi and Joseph's dream is not specified. Probably it was very short. As with the Magi, the dream may have come as an echo of his waking thoughts, an answer to the perplexities with which their visit and the other wonders of the time had filled his spirit.

**Flee into Egypt.**—The nearness of Egypt had always made it a natural asylum for refugees from Palestine. So Jeroboam had found shelter there (1 Kings xi. 40), and at a later date, Johanan the son of Kareah and his companions had fled thither from the face of Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. xliii. 7). The number of Jews who were settled in Alexandria and other cities of Egypt had probably made the step still more common during the tyranny of Herod's later years.

(14) **He took the young child and his mother.**—The form adopted here, as in the preceding verse, is significantly reverential. In a narrative of common life the natural expression would have been "his wife and the young child."

**And departed into Egypt.**—The brevity with which this is told is, to a certain extent, an argument for the non-mythical character of the narrative of which it forms a part. The legends of the Apocryphal Gospels, embodied in many forms of poetry and art, show how easily, in later times, the fabulous element crystallised round the Gospel nucleus of fact. The idols of Egypt bowed or fell down before the divine child; a well sprung up under the palm-tree that gave the traveller shelter. They were attacked by robbers, and owed their preservation to the pity of Dismas, one of the band, who was afterwards the penitent thief of the crucifixion. How far the journey extended we cannot tell. It would have been enough for Joseph's object to pass the so-called River of Egypt, which separated that country from the region under Herod's sovereignty.

(15) **Until the death of Herod.**—The uncertainty which hangs over the exact date of the Nativity hinders us from arriving at any precise statement as to the interval thus described. As the death of Herod took place a little before the Passover, B.C. 4 (according to the common but erroneous reckoning), it could not have been more than a few months, even if we fix the Nativity in the previous year.

**Out of Egypt have I called my son.**—As the words stand in Hos. xi. 1, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt," they refer, beyond the shadow of a doubt, to the history of Israel, as being in a special sense, among all the nations of the world, the chosen son of Jehovah (Exod. iv. 22, 23). It is hard to imagine any reader of the prophecy not seeing that this was what we should call *the* meaning. But the train of thought which leads the Evangelist to apply it to the Christ has a distinct method of its own. A coincidence in what seems an accessory, a mere circumstance of the story, carries his mind on to some deeper analogies. In the days of the until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.[a]

(16) Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. (17) Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet,[b] saying, (18) In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping *for* her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

(19) But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, (20) saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. (21) And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

(22) But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judæa in the room of his

[a] Hos 11. 1.

[b] Jer. 31. 15.

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Exodus, Israel was the one representative instance of the Fatherhood of God manifested in protecting and delivering His people. Now there was a higher representative in the person of the only begotten Son. As the words "Out of Egypt did I call my Son" (he translated from the Hebrew instead of reproducing the Greek version of the LXX.) rose to his memory, what more natural than that mere context and historical meaning should be left unnoticed, and that he should note with wonder what a fulfilment they had found in the circumstances he had just narrated. Here, as before, the very seeming strain put upon the literal meaning of the words is presumptive evidence that the writer had before him the fact to which it had been adapted, rather than that the narrative was constructed, as some have thought, to support the strained interpretation of the prophecy.

(16) The fact of the slaughter of the infants of Bethlehem is not mentioned by Josephus, or by any other writer, and has on that ground been called in question. It is admitted, however, on all hands, that it was an act every way in harmony with Herod's character. Tormented with incurable disease, and yet more incurable suspicion; so fiendish in his cruelty, that he gave orders for the execution of many of the leading men of Judæa immediately upon his own death, that there might at least be some genuine mourning at his funeral; making fresh wills, according to the passing passion of the moment; adding, as his last act, the death of yet another son, Antipater, to those of the two sons of Mariamne (so that Augustus was reported to have said that it was better to be "Herod's swine than son"),—it might well be that he gave such a command as this among the cruel and reckless acts of the last months of his life. Nor need we wonder that the act was not recorded elsewhere. The population of Bethlehem could hardly have been more than 2,000, and the number of children under two years of age in that number would be between twenty and thirty. The cruelty of such an act would naturally impress itself on the local memory, from which, directly or indirectly, the Gospel record was derived, and yet escape the notice of an historian writing eighty or ninety years afterwards of the wars and court history of the period. The secrecy which marked the earlier part of Herod's scheme (verse 7) would extend naturally, as far as Jerusalem was concerned, to its execution.

(18) **In Rama was there a voice heard.**—Here again we have an example of St. Matthew's application of a passage that had a direct bearing upon the events of the time when it was delivered to those which his narrative had brought before him. The tomb of Rachel, "in the way to Ephrath, which *is* Beth-lehem" (Gen. xxxv. 19), had been, probably from the day when the "pillar" which marked it was first set up, one of the sacred places of the land. It was so in the days of Samuel (1 Sam. x. 2). The language of Jeremiah in xxxi. 15, shows that it was so in his time. In his picture of the sufferings and slaughter of the captives of Judah, the image which best embodied his feelings of sorrow for his people was that of Rachel, as the great "mother in Israel," seeing, as from the "high place" of her sepulchre (this is the meaning of the name Ramah), the shame and death of her children at the other Ramah, a few miles further to the north, and weeping for her bereavement. Historically, as we find from Jer. xl. 1, this was the place to which the prisoners were dragged, that Nebuzaradan might assign "such as were for death" to death, others to exile, and others again to remain as bondsmen in the land. That picture, St. Matthew felt, had been reproduced once again. The tomb of Rachel was as familiar to the people of Bethlehem (it stands but one mile to the north of the town) as it had been in the time of Jeremiah, and the imagery was therefore as natural in the one case as the other. The Ramah of Jer. xl. 1. was about seven or eight miles further north, on the borders of Benjamin, but it has been thought by some geographers that the name was given to some locality nearer the tomb of Rachel.

(20) **They are dead.**—The use of the plural is noticeable, as Herod alone had been named. Possibly, however, others may have been implicated in the scheme; or the turn of the phrase may have been suggested to the reporter of the dream by the parallel language of Exod. iv. 19, in reference to Moses.

(22) **Archelaus.**—Strictly speaking, this prince, who, under his father's will (made just before his death), governed Judæa, Samaria, and Idumæa, was never recognised as a king by the Roman Emperor, but received the inferior title of Ethnarch. Antipas had Galilee and Peræa, Philip the region of Trachonitis. Popularly, however, the higher title was still used of him as we find it in xiv. 9 of the Tetrarch Antipas. The character of Archelaus was as cruel and treacherous as that of his father, and within a few months after his accession, he sent in his horsemen to disperse a multitude, and slew not less than 3,000 men. The temper of Antipas on the other hand was as yet looked on as milder. This, and possibly his absence from Galilee on a visit to Rome, may well have led Joseph to turn to that region as offering a prospect of greater safety (Jos. *Ant.* xvii. 2, 5, 6, 8, 9). Nine years later the oppression of Archelaus became so intolerable that both Jews and

father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: (23) and he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

A.D. 26.

CHAPTER III.—(1) In those days came John the Baptist,[a] preaching in the wilderness of Judæa, (2) and saying,

[a] Mark 1. 4; Luke 3. 2.

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Samaritans complained of him to the Emperor, and he was deposed and banished to Gaul.

(23) **He shall be called a Nazarene.**—For an account of Nazareth, see Note on Luke i. 26. Here it will be enough to deal with St. Matthew's reference to the name as in itself the fulfilment of a prophetic thought. He does not, as before, cite the words of any one prophet by name, but says generally that what he quotes had been spoken by or through the prophets. No such words are to be found in the Old Testament. It is not likely that the Evangelist would have quoted from any apocryphal prophecy, nor is there any trace of the existence of such a prophecy. The true explanation is to be found in the impression made on his mind by the verbal coincidence of fact with prediction. He had heard men speak with scorn of "the Nazarene," and yet the very syllables of that word had also fallen on his ears in one of the most glorious of the prophecies admitted to be Messianic—"There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a *Netzer* (Branch) shall grow out of his roots" (Isa. xi. 1). So he found in the word of scorn the *nomen et omen* of glory. The town of Nazareth probably took its name from this meaning of the word, as pointing, like our *-hurst* and *-holt*, to the trees and shrubs for which it was conspicuous. The general reference to the prophets is explained by the fact that the same thought is expressed in Jer. xxiii. 5; xxxiii. 15; Zech. iii. 8; vi. 12, though there the Hebrew word is *Zemach*, and not *Netzer*. A like train of thought is found in the language of Tertullian and other early Christian writers to their heathen opponents—"You call us Christians," they say, "worshippers of Christos, but you pronounce the words *Chrestiani* and *Chrestos, i.e.*, you give us a name which in your own language (Greek) means 'good,' and so you unconsciously bear testimony to the life we really lead." This seems the only tenable explanation of the passage. It is hardly likely that the Evangelist should have referred to the scorn with which Nazareth was regarded. Any reference to the Nazarite vow is out of the question, (1) because the two words are spelt differently, both in Greek and Hebrew, and (2) because our Lord's life represented quite a different aspect of holiness from that of which the Nazarite vow was the expression. That vow, as seen pre-eminently in the Baptist, represented the consecration which consists in separation from the world. The life of Christ manifested the higher form of consecration which is found in being *in* the world but not *of* it, mingling with the men and women who compose it, in order to purify and save.

### III.

(1) **John the Baptist.**—For the birth and early life of the forerunner of the Christ, see Notes on Luke i. The manner in which he is mentioned here shows that his name was already well known to all readers of the Gospel. So, in like manner, Josephus names him as popularly known by the same title (*Ant.* xviii. 5, § 2), and describes his work as that of a preacher of repentance in nearly the same terms as St. Matthew. The symbolism of ablution as the outward sign of inward purification was, of course, derived from the Mosaic ritual. It was ordered for the consecration of the priests (Ex. xxix. 4; Lev. viii. 6), for the purification of the leper and other unclean persons (Lev. xiv. 8; xv. 31, 32). It had received a fresh prominence from the language of Isa. i. 16, of Ezek. xxxvi. 25, of Zech. xiii. 1, and probably (though the date of the practice cannot be fixed with certainty) from its being used on the admission of proselytes, male or female, from heathenism. The question asked by the priests and Levites in John i. 25 implies that it was expected as one of the signs of the coming of the Messiah, probably as the result of the prophecies just referred to. That which distinguished the baptism of John from all previous forms of the same symbolism was, that it was not for those only who were affected by a special uncleanness, nor for the heathen only, but for all. All were alike unclean, and needed purification, and their coming to the baptism was in itself a confession that they were so. The baptism was, as the name implied, an immersion, and commonly, though not necessarily, in running water.

The abrupt way in which the narrative is introduced "in those days," after an interval of thirty years from the close of chap. ii., may be explained as referring to the well-known period of the commencement of John's ministry; or it may loosely refer to chap. i. 23, and imply that time had gone on with no change in the general circumstances. (Comp. Ex. ii. 11. See Excursus on the intervening History in the *Notes* on this Gospel.)

**Came.**—Literally, with the vividness of the historic present, *cometh.*

**Preaching.**—Here, as everywhere in the New Testament, the word implies proclaiming after the manner of a *herald.*

**In the wilderness of Judæa.**—The name was commonly applied to the thinly populated region in the southern valley of the Jordan, and so was equivalent to "the country about Jordan" of Luke iii. 3, including even part of the district east of the river. In this region John had grown up (Luke i. 80).

(2) **Repent.**—Etymologically, the word "repent," which has as its root-meaning the sense of pain, is hardly adequate as a rendering for the Greek word, which implies change of mind and purpose. In the Greek version of the Old Testament, the word is used of divine rather than human repentance, *i.e.*, of a change of purpose implying pity and regret (1 Sam. xv. 29; Jer. iv. 28; xviii. 8). In Wisd. v. 3; Ecclus. xvii. 24; xlviii. 15, it includes the sorrow out of which the change comes.

**The kingdom of heaven.**—The phrase is used by St. Matthew about thirty times, and by him only among the New Testament writers. In the Greek the form is plural, "the kingdom of the heavens," probably as an equivalent for the Hebrew word, which was dual in its form. The name, as descriptive of the kingdom of the Messiah, had its origin in the vision of Dan. vii. 13, where the kingdom of "one like the Son of Man" is contrasted with those of earthly rulers. To Gentile readers—to whom the term would convey the thought of the visible firmament, not of the invisible

Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. (3) For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness,[a] Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. (4) And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. (5) Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the region round about Jordan, (6) and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

(7) But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his

[a] Isa. 40. 3; Mark 1. 3.

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dwelling-place of God—the term might have been misleading, and therefore in the Gospels intended for them "the kingdom of God" (which occurs sometimes in St. Matthew also, vi. 13; xii. 28) is used instead of it. It is probable that both terms were used interchangeably by the Baptist and our Lord, and the systematic change is suggestive as showing that the writers of the Gospels did not feel themselves bound to a purely literal report or rendering of their words.

**Is at hand.**—Better, *has come nigh.*

(3) **This is he.**—The words are those of the Evangelist, not of the Baptist, though the latter also used them to describe his own office (John i. 23). In each case the reference shows how strongly the great second part of Isaiah had impressed itself on the minds of men. To the Baptist, brooding over the sins of his people, and the long-expected consolation of Israel, there had come "the word of the Lord" (Luke iii. 2), bidding him identify himself with that "voice of one crying in the wilderness."

Historically, the connection of the opening chapters of this part of Isaiah with the protests against idolatry (xl. 18—24; xli. 7; xliv. 9—20), and with the name of Cyrus (xliv. 28; xlv. 1), shows that the prophet blended his glorious visions of the ideal polity of the future with the return of the exiles from Babylon. The return came, and the ideal was not realised. The kingdom of heaven seemed still far off. Now, the Baptist came to proclaim its nearness.

**Prepare ye the way of the Lord.**—The imagery is drawn from the great strategical works of the conquerors of the East. They sent a herald before them to call the people of the countries through which they marched to prepare for their approach. A "king's highway" had to be carried through the open land of the wilderness, valleys filled up, and hills levelled (the words used are, of course, poetical in their greatness), winding bye-paths straightened, for the march of the great army. Interpreted in its spiritual application, the wilderness was the world lying in evil, and the making low the mountains and hills was the bringing down of spiritual pride. When the poor in spirit were received into the kingdom of heaven, the valleys were exalted; when soldier and publican renounced their special sins, the rough places were made plain and the crooked straight.

It is probable that the stress thus laid upon "the way of the Lord," in the first stage of the Gospel, led to the peculiar use of the term "the way" by St. Luke, to denote what we should call the "religion" of the Apostolic Church (Acts ix. 2; xviii. 25, 26; xix. 9, 23; xxii. 4; xxiv. 14, 22).

(4) **His raiment of camel's hair.**—The dress was probably deliberately adopted by the Baptist as reviving the outward appearance of Elijah, who was "a hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather" (2 Kings i. 8); and the "rough garment," that had been characteristic of the prophet's life even at a later period (Zech. xiii. 4), as contrasted with the "long garments" of the Pharisees (Mark xii. 38), and the "gorgeous apparel" of the scribes who attached themselves to the court of Herod (Luke vii. 25). The Nazarite vow of Luke i. 15 probably involved long and shaggy hair as well.

**Locusts and wild honey.**—Locusts were among the articles of food permitted by the Law (Lev. xi. 21), and were and are still used by the poor in Palestine and Syria. They are commonly salted and dried, and may be cooked in various ways, pounded, or fried in butter, and they taste like shrimps. It is needless, when the facts are so clear, to go out of the way to seek the food of the Baptist in the sweet pods of the so-called locust-tree (*Ceratonia Siliqua*), with which it has been sometimes identified. The "wild honey" was that found in the hollows of trees (as in the history of Jonathan, 1 Sam. xiv. 25), or in the "rocks" (Deut. xxxii. 13; Ps. lxxxi. 16). Stress is laid on the simplicity of the Baptist's fare, requiring no skill or appliances, the food of the poorest wanderer in the wilderness, presenting a marked contrast to the luxury of the dwellers in towns. The life of Banus, the hermit-master of Josephus, who lived only on herbs and water (*Life*, c. 2) presented analogous though not identical features.

(5) **All the region round about Jordan.**—This would include the whole length of the river-valley, and would therefore take in parts of Peræa, Samaria, Galilee, and Gaulonitis.

(6) **Were baptized.**—The Greek tense implies continual succession. Crowd after crowd passed on, and still they came *confessing their sins*—*i.e.*, as the position of the word implies, in the closest possible connection with the act of immersion. The Greek word (sometimes used for "confessing" in the sense of "praising," as in Luke xii. 8), always implies public utterance, and included, as the plural of the noun seems to show, a specific mention of, at least, the more grievous individual sins.

(7) **Pharisees and Sadducees.**—It is desirable to give, once for all, a sufficient account of these two sects to explain their relation to each other and to the teaching of our Lord. (1.) THE PHARISEES. Singularly enough, the name appears for the first time in the Gospel history. Josephus, who tells us most about them, being presumably later, if not than the Gospels in their present form, yet, at all events, than the materials from which they are derived. We cannot say, therefore, when the name came first into use. They are first mentioned by the Jewish historian as opposing the government of the priest-ruler of the Asmonæan house, John Hyrcanus (*Ant.* xiii. 5). The meaning of the name is clear enough. The Pharisees were the "separated" ones, and the meaning may help us to trace the history. The attempt of Antiochus Epiphanes (as related in the two Books of Maccabees) to blot out the distinctness of Jewish life by introducing Greek worship and Greek customs, was met with an heroic resistance by priests and people. The "mingling" or "not mingling" with the heathen in marriage or in social life became a test of religious character (2 Macc. xiv. 3, 38). The faithful became known as Assideans, *i.e.*, *Chasidim* or saints (1 Macc.

baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers,[a] who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? (8) Bring forth therefore fruits meet[1] for repentance: (9) and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father:[b] for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. (10) And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.[c] (11) I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance:[d] but he

[a] ch. 12. 34.

[1] Or, *answerable to amendment of life.*

[c] ch. 7. 19.

[b] John 8. 39.

[d] Mark 1. 8; Luke 3. 16; John 1. 26.

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ii. 42; vii. 13, 17; 2 Macc. xiv. 6), and looked to Judas Maccabeus as their leader. Later on, as the holding aloof from the heathen became more and more characteristic of them, they took the name of Pharisees, and under John Hyrcanus became a powerful and organised body; forming a kind of guild or fraternity as well as a party, uniting some features of the Puritan with some of the Society of the Jesuits. Like most sects and parties, they had their bright and their dark sides. They maintained the ethical side of the Law as against the sacrificial. They insisted on alms, and fasting, and prayer, as the three great elements of the religious life; on the Sabbath, as its great safe-guard. They did much to promote education and synagogue-building. In gathering the traditions of older Rabbis, they held themselves to be "setting a fence round the Law" to maintain its sacredness. They were eager in the mission-work of Judaism, and "compassed sea and land to make one proselyte" (Matt. xxiii. 15). They maintained or revived the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and of the rewards and punishments that were to follow. On the other side, their "separation" developed almost into the exclusiveness of a caste. Their casuistry inverted the right relation of moral and ceremonial duties. They despised the mass of their own countrymen as the "brute people of the earth." Within the sect there were two schools, represented at this time by the followers of Shammai and of Hillel, the former more after the pattern of the Puritan, rigid in its Sabbatarianism, hard and bitter in its spirit; the latter more after the type of the Jesuit, with wider culture, gentler temper, an easier casuistry, moral precepts of a wider kind. Of both schools it must be remembered that they were emphatically lay-religionists, unconnected with the priesthood, and often in opposition to it. (2.) THE SADDUCEES. Etymologically, the name, though connected with the Hebrew word for "righteous," must be derived from the proper name "Zadok," found in the Old Testament as belonging to the high priest in the time of Solomon. A tradition, of uncertain authority and date, states that the founder of the sect was a certain Zadok, the disciple of Antigonus, who, in his turn, had sat at the feet of Simon the Just. Antigonus taught, it was said, that "men should not be servants who do their Master's will for a reward," and the scholar developed the doctrine into a denial of the resurrection, which formed the reward. Whether this is a true account or not, the features of the Sadducees in the New Testament stand out with sufficient clearness. They are for the most part of the higher priestly order, as contrasted with the lay-scribes of the Pharisees. They admit the authority of the written Law, not of traditions. They deny the existence of angels and spirits, as well as the resurrection and the immortality of the soul. They made up for the absence of the fears of the future, by greater rigour in punishments on earth. They courted the favour of their Roman rulers, and to some extent even of the Herods. It is not easy to enter into the motives which led either of the sects to come to the baptism of John. It may be that they were carried away for a time by the enthusiasm of the people, or sought to guide the movement by controlling it, or to enlist the new teacher on this side or that. Anyhow, there was no repentance, and no confession, and so the Baptist met them with a stern reproof.

**O generation of vipers.**—Better, *brood,* or *offspring, of vipers.* Our Lord takes up the same term, and applies it to them at the close of his ministry (Matt. xxiii. 33).

**Who hath warned.**—Better, *who taught you?* Who had shown them the way without repentance by which they sought to escape? He had given them no such guidance, and they must have gained that notion from some other teacher.

**The wrath to come.**—This is spoken of as something definite and known, the thought resting probably on the pictures of the great day of the Lord in Mal. iii. and iv.

(8) **Fruits** (better, *fruit*) **meet for repentance.**—The English version is ambiguous and not happy, suggesting the thought of the "fruit" as preparing the way for repentance. The thought is, however, "by coming to the baptism you profess repentance; bring forth, therefore, fruit *worthy of repentance—i.e.,* of a changed heart and will."

(9) **We have Abraham to** (better, *as*) **our father.**—The boast seems to have been common, as in John viii. 33—39, and was connected with the belief that this alone, or taken together with the confession of the creed of Israel "the Lord our God is one Lord" (Deut. vi. 4), would be enough to ensure for every Jew an admission into Paradise. The "bosom" of Abraham was wide enough to receive all his children. "We have Abraham as our father" was to the Jew all and more than all that "civis Romanus sum" was to the Romans.

**Of these stones.**—The words were obviously dramatised by gesture, pointing to the pebbles on the banks of the Jordan. In their spiritual application, they are remarkable as containing the germs of all the teaching of our Lord, and of St. Paul, and of St. John, as to the calling of the Gentiles, and the universality of God's kingdom.

(10) **Now.**—Rather, *already.* The present of an act no longer future.

**The ax is laid unto the root of the trees.**—The symbolism which saw in "trees" the representatives of human characters, of nations, and institutions, had been recognised in Isaiah's parable of the vine (v. 1—7), in Jeremiah's of the vine and the olive (ii. 21; xi. 16), and the Baptist's application of it was but a natural extension. Judgments that were only partial or corrective were as the pruning of the branches (John xv. 2). Now the axe was laid to the *root,* and the alternative was preservation or destruction. For the unfruitful tree there was the doom of fire.

(11) **With water unto repentance.**—The "I" is emphasized, as also the baptism with water, as contrasted with that which was to follow. The result of John's baptism, even for those who received it faithfully,

that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire: (12) whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

(13) Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.[a] (14) But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and

[a] Mark 1. 9; Luke 3. 21.

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did not go beyond the change of character and life implied in "repentance." The higher powers of the unseen world were to be manifested afterwards.

**He that cometh after me.**—The words as spoken by the Baptist could only refer to the expected Christ, the *Lord*, whose way he had been sent to prepare.

**Mightier.**—*i.e.*, as the words that follow show, stronger both to save and to punish; at once the Deliverer and the Judge.

**Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear.**—In Luke iii. 16 we have the yet stronger expression, "The latchet (or thong) of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose." Among Jews, Greeks, and Romans alike, this office, that of untying and carrying the shoes of the master of the house or of a guest, was the well-known function of the lowest slave of the household. When our Lord washed the disciples' feet (John xiii. 4, 5), He was taking upon Himself a like menial task which, of course, actually involved the other. The remembrance of the Baptist's words may in part account for St. Peter's indignant refusal to accept such services.

**He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.**—As heard and understood at the time, the baptism with the Holy Ghost would imply that the souls thus baptised would be plunged, as it were, in that creative and informing Spirit which was the source of life and holiness and wisdom. The baptism "with fire" would convey, in its turn, the thought of a power at once destroying evil and purifying good; not, in any case, without the suffering that attends the contact of the sinner's soul with the "consuming fire" of the holiness of God, yet for those who had received the earlier baptism, and what it was meant to convey, consuming only what was evil, and leaving that which was precious brighter than before. The appearance of the "tongues like as of fire" that accompanied the gift of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost was an outward visible sign, an extension of the symbolism, rather than the actual fulfilment of the promise.

(12) **Whose fan is in his hand.**—The scene brought before us is that of the large hardened surface which was the "threshing-floor" of the East, the sheaves of corn thrown over it, the oxen treading on them, the large winnowing fan driving on them the full force of the strong current of air, leaving the wheat in the middle, while the chaff is driven to the outskirts of the field to be afterwards swept up and burnt. The metaphor was a sufficiently familiar one. (Comp. Job xxi. 18; Ps. i. 4; xxxv. 5; Isa. xvii. 13; xxix. 5; Hos. xiii. 3.) The new features here are (1) that the "coming One," the expected Christ, is to be the agent in the process; (2) that the Old Testament imagery rests in the "scattering" of the chaff, and this passes on to the "burning"; (3) that the fire is said to be "unquenched," or perhaps "unquenchable." The interpretation of the parable lies on the surface. The chaff are the ungodly and evildoers. The unquenched fire is the wrath of God against evil, which is, in its very nature, eternal, and can only cease with the cessation or transformation of the evil. The word translated "chaff" includes, it may be noted, straw as well, all but the actual grain.

It seems right briefly to direct the reader's thoughts here to what is recorded of the Baptist's ministry in the other Gospels; the questions of the priests and Levites (John i. 19—25); the counsels given to publicans, soldiers, and others (Luke iii. 10—14); the presence, among the crowd, of Galileans, some of whom were afterwards Apostles (John i. 35—42). A curious legendary addition, found in the Apocryphal Gospel according to the Hebrews, is worth noting, as preparing the way for what follows: "Behold, the mother of the Lord and his brethren said unto Him, 'John the Baptist baptiseth for the remission of sins; let us go that we may be baptised by him.' But He said unto them, 'In what have I sinned that I should go and be baptised by him? unless, perhaps, even that which I have thus spoken be a sin of ignorance.'" This was obviously an attempt to explain the difficulty of the Sinless One seeking a baptism of repentance. It was, of course, probable enough that the household of Nazareth, cherishing, as they did, hopes of the kingdom of heaven, should be drawn with other Galileans to the Baptist's preaching.

(13) **Then cometh Jesus.**—We are brought here face to face with the question which the legend just quoted sought to answer, and cannot altogether turn aside from it: Why did the Lord Jesus come to the baptism of John? The Sinless One had no sin to confess, no need of repentance. We cannot even ascribe to Him that consciousness of evil which weighs upon the hearts of the saints of God almost in exact proportion to their holiness; yet we must believe that His righteousness was essentially human, and therefore capable of increase, even as He increased in wisdom and stature. Holy as He was at every stage of life in proportion to its capacities, there yet rose before Him height upon height of holiness as yet unattained, and after which we may say with reverence He "hungered and thirsted." And for that attainment the baptism, which to others was a stepping-stone out of the slough of despond, might well seem a means, if not a condition. It was meet that He should fill up the full measure of righteousness in all its forms by accepting a divine ordinance, even, perhaps, *because* it seemed to place Him in fellowship with sinners.

(14) **John forbad him.**—Better, *sought to hinder Him.* Here again we have a question which we cannot fully answer. Did John thus forbid Him, as knowing Him to be the Christ? If so, how did that knowledge come? Had they known each other before, in youth or manhood? Or did a special inspiration reveal the character of Him who now drew near? The narrative of St. Matthew seems to imply such knowledge. On the other hand, the words of the Baptist in John i. 33 not only imply, but assert that he did not know Him till after the wonders of the Baptism. Probably, therefore, the sequence of facts was this: The Lord Jesus came to be baptised, as others did, though not, it would seem, with others. He confessed no sins. Look and tone, and words and silence alike spoke of a sinless and stainless life, such as even in approximate instances impresses us with something like awe in presence of the majesty of holiness. Recognising that holiness the

comest thou to me? (15) And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. (16) And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: (17) And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

CHAPTER IV.—(1) Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness

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Baptist spake as he did, "I have need to be baptised of Thee, to sit at Thy feet, learning lessons of purity and change of heart from Thee."

(15) **Suffer it to be so now.**—The "now" is emphatic, at the present time, in contrast with what was to follow. Hereafter, John should be the receiver and not the giver, but as yet there was a fitness in each retaining his position (the words "it becometh *us*" seem to refer to both, not to the speaker only). The word and the thought are the same as those of Heb. ii. 10. Even He had to pass through the normal stages of growth, and so an outward ordinance was even for Him the appointed way to the fulness of spiritual power. He was in His place receiving that rite. John was doing his proper work in administering it.

(16) **The heavens were opened.**—The narrative implies (1) that our Lord and the Baptist were either alone, or that they alone saw what is recorded. "The heavens were opened to *him*" as they were to Stephen (Acts vii. 56). The Baptist bears record that he too beheld the Spirit descending (John i. 33, 34), but there is not the slightest ground for supposing that there was any manifestation to others. So in the vision near Damascus, St. Paul only heard the words and saw the form of Him who spake them (Acts ix. 7; xxii. 9). That which they did see served, as did the tongues of fire on the day of Pentecost, as an attestation to the consciousness of each, of the reality of the gift imparted, and of its essential character. That descent of the Spirit, "as it were a dove," as St. Luke adds (iii. 22), "in bodily form," taught the Baptist, as it teaches us, that the gift of supernatural power and wisdom brought with it also the perfection of the tenderness, the purity, the gentleness of which the dove was the acknowledged symbol. To be "harmless as doves" was the command the Lord gave to His disciples (Matt. x. 16), and when they read this record, they were taught as we are, "of what manner of spirit" they were meant to be.

(17) **A voice from heaven.**—The words were heard, so far as the record goes, as the sign was seen, by our Lord and the Baptist only. It was a testimony to them, and not to the multitude. The precise force of the latter clause, *in whom I was well pleased*, points (to speak after the manner of men) rather to a definite divine act or thought, than to a continued ever-present acceptance. He who stood there was the beloved Son, in whom, "in the beginning," the Father was well-pleased. To the Baptist this came as the answer to all questionings. This was none other than the King to whom had been spoken the words, "Thou art my Son" (Ps. ii. 7), who was to the Eternal Father what Isaac was to Abraham (the very term "beloved son" is used in the Greek of Gen. xxii. 2, where the English version has "only"), upon whom the mind of the Father rested with infinite content. And we may venture to believe that the "voice" came as an attestation also to the human consciousness of the Son of Man. There had been before, as in Luke ii. 49, the sense that God was His Father. Now, with an intensity before unfelt, and followed, as the sequel shows, with entire change in life and action, there is, in His human soul, the conviction that He is "*the* Son, *the* beloved."

Here, as before, it is instructive to note the legendary accretions that have gathered round the simple narrative of the Gospels. Justin (*Dial.* c., *Tryph.* p. 316) adds that "a fire was kindled in Jordan." An Ebionite Gospel added to the words from heaven, "This day have I begotten thee," and further adds, "a great light shone around the place, and John saw it, and said, 'Who art thou, Lord?' and again a voice from heaven, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' And then John fell down, and said, 'I beseech Thee, O Lord, baptise Thou me.' But He forbade him, saying, 'Suffer it, for thus it is meet that all things should be accomplished.'"

More important and more difficult is the question, What change was actually wrought in our Lord's human nature by this descent of the Spirit? The words of the Baptist, "He giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him" (John iii. 34) imply the bestowal of a real gift. The words that follow here, "He was led by the Spirit" (iv. 1), "The Spirit driveth Him" (Mark i. 12), show, in part, the nature of the change. We may venture to think even there of new gifts, new powers, a new intuition (comp. John iii. 11), a new constraint, as it were, bringing the human will that was before in harmony with the divine into a fuller consciousness of that harmony, and into more intense activity; above all, a new intensity of prayer, uttering itself in Him, as afterwards in His people, in the cry, "Abba, Father" (Mark xiv. 36; Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 6). There also we may think of the Spirit as "making intercession with groanings that cannot be uttered."

## IV.

(1) The narrative of the Temptation is confessedly one of the most mysterious in the Gospel records. In one respect it stands almost, if not altogether, alone. It could not have come, directly or indirectly, from an eye-witness. We are compelled to look on it either as a mythical after-growth; as a supernatural revelation of facts that could not otherwise be known; or, lastly, as having had its source in our Lord's own report of what He had passed through. The first of these views is natural enough with those who apply the same theory to all that is marvellous and supernatural in our Lord's life. As a theory generally applicable, however, to the interpretation of the Gospels, that view has not been adopted in this Commentary, and there are certainly no reasons why, rejecting it elsewhere, we should accept it here. Had it been based upon the narrative of the temptation of the first Adam, in Gen. iii., we should have expected the recurrence of the same symbolism, of the serpent and the trees. Nothing else in the Old Testament, nothing in the popular expectations of the Christ, could have suggested anything of the kind. The ideal Christ of those expectations would have been a great and mighty king,

to be tempted of the devil.[a] (2) And when he had fasted forty days and forty

[a] Mark 1. 12; Luke 4. 1.

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showing forth his wisdom and glory, as did the historical son of David; not a sufferer tried and tempted. The forms of the Temptation, still more the answers to them, have, it will be seen, a distinct individuality about them, just conceivable in the work of some consummate artist, but utterly unlike the imagery, beautiful or grand, which enters into most myths. Here, therefore, the narrative will be dealt with as the record of an actual experience. To assume that this record was miraculously revealed to St. Matthew and St. Luke is, however, to introduce an hypothesis which cannot be proved, and which is, at least, not in harmony with their general character as writers. They are, one by his own statement, the other by inference from the structure and contents of his Gospel, distinctly compilers from many different sources, with all the incidental variations to which such a process is liable. There is no reason to look on this narrative as an exception to the general rule. The very difference in the order of the temptations is, as far as it goes, against the idea of a supernatural revelation. There remains, then, the conclusion that we have here that which originated in some communication from our Lord's own lips to one of His disciples, His own record of the experience of those forty days. So taken, it will be seen that all is coherent, and in some sense (marvellous as the whole is), natural, throwing light on our Lord's past life, explaining much that followed in His teaching.

**Led up of the spirit.**—Each narrator expresses the same fact in slightly different language. St. Luke (iv. 1), "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, was led in the wilderness." St. Mark (i. 12), more vividly, "Immediately the Spirit driveth Him into the wilderness." What is meant by such language? The answer is found in the analogous instances of seers and prophets. St. John was "in the Spirit on the Lord's day" (Rev. i. 10). The Spirit "lifted up" Ezekiel that from his exile by the banks of Chebar he might see the secret sins of Jerusalem (Ezek. viii. 3). The "Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip" (Acts viii. 39). Those who spake with tongues spake "by the Spirit" (1 Cor. xiv. 2). The result of this induction leads us to think of the state so described as one more or less of the nature of ecstasy, in which the ordinary phenomena of consciousness and animal life were in great measure suspended. That gift of the Spirit had on the human nature of the Son of Man something of the same overpowering mastery that it has had over others of the sons of men. A power mightier than His own human will was urging Him on, it might almost be said He knew not whither, bringing Him into conflict "not with flesh and blood," but with "principalities and powers in heavenly places."

**To be tempted of the devil.**—We are brought, at the outset of the narrative, face to face with the problem of the existence and personality of the power of evil. Here that existence and personality are placed before us in the most distinct language. Whatever difficulties such a view may be thought to present, whatever objections may be brought against it, are altogether outside the range of the interpreter of Scripture. It may be urged that the writers of what we call the Scriptures have inherited a mistaken creed on this point (though to this all deeper experience is opposed), or that they have accommodated themselves to the thoughts of a creed which they did not hold (though of such an hypothesis there is not a particle of evidence), but it would be the boldest of all paradoxes to assert that they do not teach the existence of an evil power whom they call the Enemy, the Accuser, the Devil. Whence the name came, and how the belief sprang up, are, on the other hand, questions which the interpreter is bound to answer. The name, then, of devil (*diabolos*, accuser or slanderer) appears in the LXX. version of 1 Chron. xxi. 1, Job i. 6, ii. 1, as the equivalent for the Hebrew, Satan (the adversary). He appears there as a spiritual being of superhuman but limited power, tempting men to evil, and accusing them before the Throne of God when they have yielded to the temptation. In Zech. iii. 1, 2, the same name appears in the Hebrew and the LXX. connected with a like character, as the accuser of Joshua the son of Jozedek. In Wisd. ii. 24, the name is identified with the Tempter of Gen. iii., and as that book belongs to the half-century before, or, more probably, the half-century after, our Lord's birth, it may fairly be taken as representing the received belief of the Jews in His time.

Into conflict with such a Being our Lord was now brought. The temptations which come to other men from their bodily desires, or from the evils of the world around them, had had no power over Him, had not brought even the sense of effort or pain in overcoming them. But if life had passed on thus to the end, the holiness which was inseparable from it would have been imperfect at least in one respect: it would not have earned the power to understand and sympathise with sinners. There was, as the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches, a divine fitness that He too should suffer and be tempted even as we are, that so He might "be able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb. ii. 18).

The scene of the Temptation was probably not far from that of the Baptism, probably, too, as it implies solitude, on the eastern rather than the western side of the Jordan. The traditional Desert of Quarantania (the name referring to the forty days' fast) is in the neighbourhood of Jericho. The histories of Moses and Elijah might suggest the Wilderness of Sinai, but in that case it would have probably been mentioned by the Evangelists.

(2) **Forty days and forty nights.**—Here we have an obvious parallelism with the fasts of Moses (Ex. xxxiv. 28) and Elijah (1 Kings xix. 8), and we may well think of it as deliberately planned. Prolonged fasts of nearly the same extent have been recorded in later times. The effect of such a fast on any human organism, and therefore on our Lord's real humanity, would be to interrupt the ordinary continuity of life, and quicken all perceptions of the spiritual world into a new intensity. It may be noted that St. Luke describes the Temptation as continuing through the whole period, so that what is recorded was but the crowning conflict, gathering into one the struggles by which it had been preluded. The one feature peculiar to St. Mark (who omits the specific history of the temptations), that our Lord "was with the wild beasts" (i. 13), suggests that their presence, their yells of hunger, their ravening fierceness, their wild glaring eyes, had left, as it were, an ineffable and ineffaceable impression of horror, in addition to the terrors and loneliness of the wilderness as such.

**He was afterward an hungred.**—The words imply a partial return to the common life of sensation. The cravings of the body at last made themselves felt, nights, he was afterward an hungred. (3) And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. (4) But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.[a] (5) Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, (6) and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is

[a] Deut. 8. 3.

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and in them, together with the memory of the divine witness that had been borne forty days before, the Tempter found the starting-point of his first attack. Of that attack there may well have been preludes during the previous time of trial. Now it came more distinctly.

(3) **When the tempter came.**—Nothing in the narrative suggests the idea of a bodily presence visible to the eye of sense, and all attempts so to realise it, whether as Milton has done in *Paradise Regained,* or as by rationalistic commentators, who held that the Tempter was, or assumed the shape of, a scribe or priest, are unauthorised, and diminish our sense of the reality and mystery of the Temptation. The narrative is not the less real and true because it lies altogether in the spiritual region of man's life.

**If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.**—"These stones," as if in union with glance and gesture, pointing to the loaf-like flints of the Jordan desert. The nature of the temptation, so far as we can gauge its mysterious depth, was probably complex. Something there may have been, suggested from without, like that which uttered itself in Esau's cry, "What profit shall this birthright do to me?" (Gen. xxv. 32). Hungry, exhausted, as if life were ebbing away in the terrible loneliness of the desert, the "wild beasts" around him, as if waiting for their victim, what would it avail to have been marked out as the Son of God, the long-expected Christ? With this another thought was blended. If He were the Son of God, did not that name involve a lordship over nature? Could He not satisfy His hunger and sustain His life? Would He not in so exercising the power of which now, for the first time it may be, He was the conscious possessor, be establishing his *status* as the Christ in the eyes of others? That thought presented itself to His mind, but it was rejected as coming from the Enemy. It would have been an act of self-assertion and distrust, and therefore would have involved not the affirmation, but the denial of the Sonship which had so recently been attested.

(4) **It is written.**—The words of all the three answers to the Tempter come from two chapters of Deuteronomy, one of which (Deut. vi.) supplied one of the passages (vi. 4—9) for the phylacteries or frontlets worn by devout Jews. The fact is every way suggestive. A prominence was thus given to that portion of the book, which made it an essential part of the education of every Israelite. The words which our Lord now uses had, we must believe, been familiar to Him from His childhood, and He had read their meaning rightly. With them He may have sustained the faith of others in the struggles of the Nazareth home with poverty and want. And now He finds in them a truth which belongs to His high calling as well as to His life of lowliness. "Not by bread only doth man live, but by the word, *i.e.*, the will, of God." He can leave His life and all that belongs to it in His Father's hands. In so losing His life, if that should be the issue, He is certain that He shall save it. If His Father has given Him a work to do, He will enable Him to fulfil it. As this act of faith throws us back on the training of the childhood, so we trace its echoes in the after-teaching of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. vi. 25—32), of Matt. x. 39, yet more in that of John vi. The experience of the wilderness clothed the history of the bread from heaven with a new significance.

(5) The order of the last two temptations is different in St. Luke, and the variation is instructive. Either St. Luke's informant was less accurate than St. Matthew's, or the impressions left on the minds of those to whom the mystery had been communicated were slightly different. Especially was this likely to be the case, if the trial had been (as the narratives of St. Mark and St. Luke show) protracted, and the temptations therefore recurring. St. Matthew's order seems, on the whole, the truest, and the "Get thee behind me, Satan," fits in better with the close of the conflict.

**Taketh him up into the holy city.**—The use of this term to describe Jerusalem (Luke iv. 9) is peculiar to St. Matthew among the Evangelists, and is used again by him in xxvii. 53. St. John uses it in Rev. xi. 2 of the literal, in xxi. 2 of the heavenly, Jerusalem. The analogy of Ezek. xxxvii. 1, xl. 2, where the prophet is carried from place to place in the vision of God, leads us to think of this "taking" as outside the conditions of local motion. As St. Paul said of like spiritual experiences of his own (2 Cor. xii. 2), so we must say of this, Whether it was in the body, or out of the body, we know not, God knoweth.

**A pinnacle of the temple.**—Better, *the pinnacle.* The Greek has the article. The Greek word, like "pinnacle" is the diminutive of "wing," and seems to have been applied to any pointed roof or gable. In this case, looking to the position and structure of the Temple, we may think of the point or parapet of the portico of Herod overlooking the Valley of Jehoshaphat, rising to a dizzy height of 400 cubits above it (Jos. *Ant.* xv. 11, 5). Our Lord's earlier visits to Jerusalem must have made the scene familiar to Him. In past years He may have looked down from that portico on the dark gorge beneath. Now a new thought is brought before Him. Shall He test the attestation that He was the beloved Son by throwing himself headlong down? Was there not a seeming warrant for such a trial, the crucial experiment of Sonship? Had not the Psalmist declared of the chosen One of God that His angels should bear Him up? This seems a far truer view than that the point of the temptation lay in the suggestion that He should work a sign or wonder by throwing Himself, in the presence of the people, from the parapet that overlooked the court of the worshippers, and so obtain power and popularity. The answer to the Tempter shows that the suggestion tended, not to vain glory, but to distrust simulating reliance. It is a somewhat curious coincidence that James the Just, the brother of the Lord, is said to have been thrown down from "the pinnacle of the Temple" into one of its courts (Euseb. *H. E.* ii. 23).

(6) **If thou be the Son of God.**—In this case, as before, the temptation starts from the attestation

written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.[a] (7) Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.[b] (8) Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; (9) and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. (10) Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.[c] (11) Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

[a] Ps. 91. 11.

[b] Deut. 6. 16.

[c] Deut. 6. 13, & 10. 20.

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of the character of Jesus as the Son of God. With this there is now joined an appeal to familiar and sacred words, and the subtlety of the Tempter lay in his perversion of their true meaning. Here, too, the words throw light on the previous spiritual life of the Son of Man. As in all analogous temptations (and the history would have but little significance or interest for us if it were not analogous to many human experiences) the words which were presented to the soul, with their true meaning obscured and perverted, must have been precisely those that had before been most precious. We can think of Him as having fed on those words, found in them the stay and comfort of His life, without ever dreaming (if one may venture so to speak) of putting them to the test by devices of His own imagining.

**In their hands.**—Better, *on.* The angelic hands are thought of as sustaining and up-bearing.

(7) **It is written again.**—The words are, as already stated, from the chapter that contains one of the passages written on the phylacteries, that were probably used by our Lord Himself. As the words stand in Deut. vi. 16, their general meaning is specialised by an historical reference, "Ye shall not tempt the Lord thy God, as ye tempted Him in Massah." In the history thus referred to, the sin of the people had been that they questioned the presence of God with them until they saw a supernatural proof of it. They asked, "Is Jehovah among us, or not?" and that question sprang from unbelief. To have demanded a like proof of His Father's care now would have identified the Son of Man with a like spirit of distrust, and the history of that temptation was therefore a sufficient answer to this. Here, too, a light is thrown on the future teaching of the Christ. The lessons of the wilderness taught Him (the word may seem bold, but it is justified by Heb. v. 8) to commit Himself absolutely to His Father's will. We find almost an echo of what is recorded here in the words which tell us that He forbore to pray for the twelve legions of angels which the Father would have sent him (Matt. xxvi. 53).

(8) **An exceeding high mountain.**—Here, if proof were wanted, we have evidence that all that passed in the Temptation was in the region of which the spirit, and not the senses, takes cognisance. No "specular mount" (I use Milton's phrase) in the whole earth commands a survey of "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them." St. Luke's addition "in a moment of time," in one of those flashes of intuition which concentrate into a single act of consciousness the work of years, adds, if anything could add, to the certainty of this view. Milton's well-known expansion of this part of the Temptation (*Paradise Regained*, Book III.), though too obviously the work of a scholar exulting in his scholarship, is yet worth studying as the first serious attempt to realise in part, at least, what must thus have been presented to our Lord's mind.

(9) **All these things will I give thee.**—St. Luke's addition, "For that is (has been) delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it," is full of significance. The offer made by the Tempter rested on the apparent evidence of the world's history. The rulers of the world, its Herods and its Cæsars, seemed to have attained their eminence by trampling the laws of God under foot, and accepting Evil as the Lord and Master of the world. In part, the claim is allowed by our Lord's language and that of his Apostles. Satan is "the prince of this world" (John xii. 31; xiv. 30). His hosts are "the world-rulers (κοσμοκράτορας) of darkness" (Eph. vi. 12). In this case the temptation is no longer addressed to the sense of Sonship, but to the love of power. To be a King like other kings, mighty to deliver His people from their oppressors, and achieve the glory which the prophets had predicted for the Christ;—this was possible for Him if only He would go beyond the self-imposed limits of accepting whatsoever His Father ordered for Him.

**Wilt fall down and worship me.**—The latter word properly expresses, as apparently throughout the New Testament, the homage offered to a king rather than the adoration due to God.

(10) **Get thee hence, Satan.**—Once more the answer to the Tempter was found in the words of the *Tephillim* and the lessons of childhood. No evidence of power could change the eternal laws of duty. There came to the Son of Man the old command, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God," as an oracle from heaven, and this, rather than an attempt to refute the claim of sovereignty, was that on which He took His stand. Others, dealing with the same temptation, as the writers of the Book of Job and of Ps. lxxiii., have discussed the question of the apparent triumph of evil in the world's history, and have pointed to its ultimate downfall, to the sure though slow retribution which even that history records, to the redress of the anomalies of this life in a life beyond the grave. Here we have a truer and simpler answer. Even though they cannot solve the problem, the true wisdom of men who follow in the footsteps of Christ is to recognise that their allegiance is due to God and to Him only. Here, once more, the truth thus affirmed reappears later on. When the chief of the Apostles sought to turn his Master from the appointed path of suffering, he was met, as renewing the same form of temptation which had been thus resisted, with the self-same words. Even Peter had to hear himself rebuked with "Get thee behind me, Satan" (Matt. xvi. 23). The use of the formula here, for the first time in the conflict, is significant as implying that in the previous temptations Evil had presented itself in disguise, making sins of distrust appear as acts of faith, while now it showed itself in its naked and absolute antagonism to the divine will.

(11) **Angels came and ministered unto him.**—The tenses of the two verbs differ, the latter implying continued or repeated ministrations. Here also we are in

(12) Now when Jesus had heard that John was [1]cast into prison,[a] he departed into Galilee; (13) and leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: (14) that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, (15) The land of Zabulon,[b] and the land of Nephthalim, *by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; (16) the people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.

[1] Or, *delivered up.*
[a] Mark 1. 14; Luke 4. 14; John 4. 43.
[b] Isa. 9. 1.

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the region of the spiritual life, and must be content to leave the nature of the ministration undefined, instead of sensualising it as poets and artists have done. What is instructive is, that the help of their service, the contrast between the calm and beauty of their presence and that of the wild beasts and of the Tempter, comes as the reward of the abnegation which refused to make their ministry the subject of an experimental test. In this case, also, we find strange coincidences. The fact recorded by St. Matthew explains the words recorded by St. John (i. 51) as uttered but a few days later, and which speak of "the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." The words with which St. Luke ends his record of the Temptation may well be noticed here: "And having finished every temptation, the devil departed from him for a season" (literally, *till a season*). The conflict was not yet ended, and was from time to time renewed—now in the passionate prayer of the disciple (Matt. xvi. 22), now in the open enmity of the prince of this world (John xii. 31; xiv. 30).

(12) Between the 11th and 12th verses there is a great break, and it is well to remember what passed in the interval: (1) the return to the Baptist, and the call of the six disciples (John i. 29—51); (2) the marriage at Cana, and the visit to Capernaum (John ii. 1—12); (3) the cleansing of the Temple; the interview with Nicodemus, and the last testimony of the Baptist (John ii. 13 to iii. 36). At this stage comes in the imprisonment of John (mentioned here, but not narrated till xiv. 3—5) and the consequent journey through Samaria to Galilee (John iv. 1—42). The verse now before us may be noted as implying a ministry in Judæa, which for some reason the writer does not narrate.

(13) **Leaving Nazareth.**—The form of the name in the older MSS. is Nazara. St. Matthew records the bare fact. St. Luke (iv. 16—30) connects it with His rejection by the men of this very place, where He had been brought up, and their attempt upon His life. St. John (ii. 12) states a fact which implies (1) that Capernaum had not been before the home of the mother of our Lord and of His brethren, and (2) that there were ties of some kind drawing them thither for a temporary visit. The reasons for the choice of that city lie, some of them, on the surface.

(1.) The exact site of Capernaum has long been one of the vexed questions of the topography of Palestine, but the researches of the Palestine Exploration Society have identified it with the modern village of *Tell-Hûm,* where their excavations have disinterred the remains of an ancient building of the Roman period, which is supposed to have been the synagogue of the city; possibly, therefore, the very synagogue, built by the believing centurion (Luke vii. 5), in which our Lord worshipped and taught (John vi. 59). Its position on the shore of the lake, as a town with a garrison and a custom-house, made it the natural centre of the fishing-trade of the Lake of Galilee. As such, it fell in with the habits of the four first-called disciples, who, though two of them were of Bethsaida, were already partly domiciled there. (2.) It was within an easy day's journey of Nazareth, and so admitted either of another visit thither, as if to see whether those who dwelt there were more capable of faith than they had shown themselves at first (Matt. xiii. 54), or, as in Matt. xii. 46—50, of visits from His mother, and His brethren, when they were anxious to restrain Him from teaching that seemed to them perilous. (3.) Even the presence of the "publicans and sinners"—the latter term including Gentiles, the class of those who had flocked to the preaching of John, and were to be found in the half-Romanised city, and were not to be found in the more secluded villages—may have been one of the elements which led to the decisive choice. (4.) Lastly, St. John's narrative supplies another link. The healing of the son of one of the Tetrarch's officers at Capernaum (John iv. 46—54) had secured there a certain degree of protection and of influence.

The chronology of John v. 1 is uncertain (see Notes there), but at some time before, or shortly after, this migration to Capernaum, we must place the visit to Jerusalem, and the miracle at Bethesda, which St. John there records.

(14) The light in which the fact of the migration presented itself to St. Matthew was, as with other facts, that it agreed with what had been spoken by a prophet. The abode of Nazareth had thus fulfilled one prediction, that at Capernaum fulfilled another.

(15), (16) The citation is remarkable as the only reference in the New Testament to what seems to us the most wonderful and majestic of all Messianic prophecies; and still more remarkable as dwelling, not on the words so familiar to us, "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given . . . ," but on the merely local imagery which is a prelude to that great utterance, and on that, in a version which is neither a true rendering of the Hebrew, nor a correct citation from the received Greek version. We have to recognise the fact that the Evangelist did not study prophecy as we study it. Books were scarce, and the publican of Capernaum, though his occupation implied some clerkly knowledge, probably had few, and heard rather than read the Scriptures which he quotes. What strikes a man who learns in this way is the coincidence of single words and phrases with familiar facts. He speaks not of what has been *written,* but of what has been *spoken.* He is not careful about the context. When St. Matthew looked back on the change that had come over Capernaum in the arrival of the prophet of Nazareth—a change extending to his own life—these words seemed the only adequate description of it. Here was the very scene of which Isaiah had spoken, the old border country of Zebulon and of Naphthali. To him and to others who had been in the darkness of spiritual ignorance, neglected and uncared for, as sheep gone astray in the dark valley of death, there had sprung up a marvellous Light. Unconsciously he adds his testimony to that of St. John, that the presence of Jesus was felt to be that of the "true Light" that "lighteth every man" (John i. 9).

(17) From that time Jesus began to preach,[a] and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

(18) And Jesus,[b] walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. (19) And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. (20) And they straightway left *their* nets, and followed him. (21) And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. (22) And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

(23) And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and

[a] Mark 1. 14.

[b] Mark 1. 16.

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(17) **From that time Jesus began to preach.**—We have in these words St. Matthew's record of the commencement of our Lord's Galilean ministry. It is important to remember that it had been preceded by a ministry of some months in Judæa; that that ministry had been outwardly like that of the Baptist (John iv. 1); and that He had withdrawn from it upon John's imprisonment because He knew that His own growing fame had attracted the notice of the Pharisees. Taking the data given by John ii. 13, 23; v. 1; and vi. 4, we are able to fix the time of His first appearance as a prophet in His own country in the autumn or winter of the interval between the Passover of A.D. 26 and that of A.D. 27.

Of the usual method of our Lord's synagogue-preaching, Luke iv. 17—21 gives us a representative example. To read the prophetic lesson for the day, to make that His text, to proclaim the necessity of repentance and the good news of forgiveness following on repentance, to bear His witness that "the kingdom of heaven" was not in the far-off future, but nigh at hand, in the midst of them—this we must believe was, at this time, as ever, the substance of His teaching and preaching. (See Notes on verse 23.)

(18) **And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee.**—In no part of the Gospel history is it more necessary to remember St. John's record as we read that of the Three, than in this call of the disciples. Here, everything seems sudden and abrupt. There we learn that those who were now called had some months before accepted Him as the Christ (John i. 35—43), and had, some or all of them, been with Him during His visit to Jerusalem. Simon had already received the surname of Cephas or Peter or the Rock. Putting these facts together, we have something like a clear outline picture of their previous life. The sons of Jona and the sons of Zebedee had grown up in Bethsaida (probably on the north-west shore of the Lake of Galilee), and were partners in their work as fishermen. The movement of Judas of Galilee, in his assertion of national independence, had probably served to quicken their expectations of a good time coming, when they should be free from their oppressors. When they heard of the preaching of the Baptist, they joined the crowds that flocked to hear him, and received his baptism of repentance. Then they were pointed to the Lamb of God, and received Him as the Christ. Then for a short time they were His companions in His journeyings. When He began the first circuit of His Galilean ministry He was alone, and left them to return to their old calling. They could not tell whether He would ever care to use their services again, and it was under these circumstances that the new call came. St. Matthew's narrative and St. Mark's (i. 16—20) agree almost verbally; St. Luke's presents more difficulty. Is it another and fuller version of the same facts? or, if different, did what he records precede or follow the call which they relate? The first view seems the most probable, but see Notes on Luke v. 1—11.

(19) **Follow me.**—The command came, as we have seen, to those who were not unprepared. Short as it was, it was in some sense the first parable in our Lord's teaching, the germ of an actual parable (Matt. xiii. 47). It suggested a whole circle of thoughts. The sea is the troubled and evil world (Isa. lvii. 20), and the souls of men are the fish that have to be caught and taken from it, and the net is the Church of Christ. The figure had been used before (Jer. xvi. 16), but then it had presented its darker aspect, and the "fishers of men" were their captors and enslavers. The earliest extant hymn of the Church, by Clement of Alexandria, dwells on the image with a rich and suggestive playfulness. Christ is thus addressed:—

"Fisher of men, the blest,
Out of the world's unrest,
Out of sin's troubled sea
Taking us, Lord, to Thee;
Out of the waves of strife,
With bait of blissful life,
Drawing Thy nets to shore
With choicest fish, good store."

(21) **Mending their nets.**—On the assumption that the facts in St. Luke preceded what we read here, the "mending" might seem the natural consequence of the "breaking" there described, and be noted as an undesigned coincidence. It must be remembered, however, (1) that the "mending" as well as "washing" followed naturally even on a night of unsuccessful fishing, and (2) that the Greek of St. Luke does not say that the nets actually broke, but that they were on the point of breaking, and were beginning to do so.

(22) **Left the ship and their father.**—St. Mark adds, "with the hired servants," a fact of interest as showing that the sons of Zebedee were probably, in some measure, of better means and higher social standing than those of Jona. The absence of the name of the latter suggests the inference that he was no longer living.

The sacrifice of the disciples seems, perhaps, small as compared with others in the history of saints; yet to leave all, to give up the life of home, and its regular occupations, requires, in any case, an effort more or less heroic; and beyond it there lay the future, as yet undiscerned, with all its possible trials and sufferings, to which, by that one act, they pledged themselves. (Comp. xix. 27.)

(23) **Preaching the gospel of the kingdom.**—As far as regards St. Matthew this is the first occurrence of the phrase. It tells of a vast amount of unrecorded teaching, varying in form, yet essentially the same—a call to repentance—the good news of a kingdom of heaven not far off—the witness, by act for the most part rather than words, that He was Himself the Head of that kingdom.

all manner of disease among the people. (24) And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. (25) And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and *from* Decapolis, and *from* Jerusalem, and *from* Judæa, and *from* beyond Jordan.

A.D. 31.

CHAPTER V.—(1) And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came

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**Healing all manner of sickness.**—In the Greek, as in the English, sickness implies a less serious form of suffering than "disease," as the "torments" of the next verse imply, in their turn, something more acute. St. Matthew's first mention of our Lord's miracles cannot be read without interest. It will be seen that they are referred to, not directly as evidence of a supernatural mission, but almost, so to speak, as the natural accompaniments of His work; signs, not of power only or chiefly, but of the love, tenderness, pity, which were the true marks or "notes" of the kingdom of heaven. Restoration to outward health was at once the pledge that the Son of Man had not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them, and often, we cannot doubt, served to strengthen that faith in the love of the Father, some degree of which was all but invariably required as an antecedent condition of the miracle (Matt. xiii. 58).

(24) **Throughout all Syria.**—The word is probably used popularly, rather than with the definite significance of the Roman province with which St. Luke uses it in ii. 2. Our Lord's ministry, with the one exception of the journey to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon (Matt. xv. 21), was confined to what is commonly known as Palestine. Traces of the wider fame are, however, found in the mention of hearers from Idumæa, and Tyre, and Sidon among the crowds that followed Him (Mark iii. 8); in the faith of the Syro-Phœnician woman in His power to heal (Mark vii. 26); perhaps in the existence of disciples at Damascus so soon after the Ascension (Acts ix. 2); perhaps, also, in St. Peter's appeal to the friends of Cornelius at Cæsarea, as knowing already the broad facts of our Lord's ministry and miraculous working (Acts x. 37).

**Possessed with devils . . . . . lunatick.**—The phenomena of what is called possession, and the theories to which the phenomena have been referred, will best be discussed in dealing with the great representative instance of the Gadarene demoniacs (Matt. viii. 28). Here it will be enough to notice (1) that the word rendered "devil" is not the same as that used for the Tempter in iv. 1, but "demon" in the sense of an evil spirit, (2) that the possessed with demons are at once grouped with the "lunaticks," both exhibiting forms of mental disease, and distinguished from them. The latter term implies in the Greek, as in the Latin and our own, "moonstruck madness"—the belief that the moon exercised a disturbing influence on the brain (a *coup de lune* being dreaded by Eastern travellers almost as much as a *coup de soleil*), and that the intensity of the disturbance varied, when the disease had once set in, with the moon's changes.

**Those that had the palsy.**—Here the word (literally, *the paralytics*) points, not to a view of the cause of the disease, but to its conspicuous phenomena—the want of muscular power to control motion, and the consequent "looseness," in popular phraseology, of limbs or head.

(25) **Decapolis.**—The district so named was formed by the Romans on their first conquest of Syria, B.C. 65, and, speaking roughly, included a tract of country east and south-east of the Sea of Galilee. The ten cities from which the region took its name are given by Pliny (v. 18)—though with the reservation that the list was given differently by others—as Scythopolis, Hippos, Gadara, Pella, Philadelphia, Gerasa, Dion, Canatha, Damascus, and Raphana. Of these Gadara (Matt. viii. 28; Mark v. 1; Luke viii. 26), and in some MSS. of the first named passage, Gerasa, are the only two that occur in the Gospels. Damascus is prominent in the Acts, but the statement of Josephus (*B. J.* iii. 9, § 7), that Scythopolis was the largest of the ten towns, makes it almost certain that he did not include Damascus in the list.

## V.

(1) What is known as the Sermon on the Mount is obviously placed by St. Matthew (who appears in the earliest traditions connected with his name as a collector of our Lord's "Oracles" or discourses) in the fore-front of his record of His work, as a great pattern-discourse, that which more than any other represented the teaching with which He began His work. Few will fail to recognise the fitness of its position, and the influence which it has exercised wherever the Gospel record has found its way. More than any other part of that record did it impress itself on the minds of men in the first age of the Church, and more often is it quoted by the writers of that period—St. James, and Barnabas, and Clement of Rome, and Ignatius, and Polycarp. More than any other portion, in recent time, has it attracted the admiring reverence even of many who did not look on the Preacher of the Sermon as the faith of Christendom looks on Him. Not unfrequently its teaching, as being purely ethical, has been contrasted with the more dogmatic character of the discourses that appear in St. John. How far that contrast really exists will appear as we interpret it. Two preliminary questions, however, present themselves: (1) Have we here the actual verbatim report of one single discourse? (2) Is that discourse the same as that which we find in Luke vi. 20—49, and which, for the sake of distinctness, we may call the Sermon on the Plain? Following the method hitherto adopted in dealing with problems which rise from the comparison of one Gospel with another, the latter inquiry will be postponed till we have to meet it in writing on St. Luke's Gospel. Here it will be enough to state the conclusion which seems to be most probable, that the two discourses are quite distinct, and that each has traceably a purpose and method of its own. The other question calls for discussion now.

At first sight there is much that favours the belief that the Sermon on the Mount is, as it were, a pattern discourse, framed out of the fragments of many like discourses. Not only is there a large element common to it and to the Sermon on the Plain, but we find many unto him: (2) and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, (3) Blessed *are* the poor in spirit:[a] for their's is the kingdom of heaven. (4) Blessed *are* they

a Luke 6. 20.

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other portions of it scattered here and there in other parts of St. Luke's Gospel. Thus we have:—

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) | Matt. | v. | 13 | ... | Luke | xiv. | 34 |
| (2) | ,, | v. | 18 | ... | ,, | xvi. | 17 |
| (3) | ,, | v. | 25, 26 | ... | ,, | xii. | 58 |
| (4) | ,, | v. | 32 | ... | ,, | xvi. | 18 |
| (5) | ,, | vi. | 9—13 | ... | ,, | xi. | 2—4 |
| (6) | ,, | vi. | 19—21 | ... | ,, | xii. | 33, 34 |
| (7) | ,, | vi. | 22, 23 | ... | ,, | xi. | 34—36 |
| (8) | ,, | vi. | 24 | ... | ,, | xvi. | 13 |
| (9) | ,, | vi. | 25 | ... | ,, | xii. | 22, 23 |
| (9) | ,, | vi. | 26—34 | ... | ,, | xii. | 24—31 |
| (10) | ,, | vii. | 7—11 | ... | ,, | xi. | 9—13 |
| (11) | ,, | vii. | 13 | ... | ,, | xiii. | 24 |
| (12) | ,, | vii. | 22, 23 | ... | ,, | xiii. | 25—27 |

In most of these passages St. Luke reports what served as the starting-point of the teaching. It comes as the answer to a question, as the rebuke of a special fault. We might be led to think that the two Evangelists, coming across a collection more or less complete of our Lord's words (I use the term as taking in a wider range than discourses), had used them each after his manner: St. Matthew by seeking to dovetail them as much as he could into a continuous whole; St. Luke by trying, as far as possible, to trace them to their sources, and connect them with individual facts. This line of thought is, however, traversed by other facts that lead to an opposite conclusion. In chapters v. and vi. of the Sermon on the Mount there is strong evidence of a systematic plan, and therefore of unity. The Beatitudes and the verses that immediately follow (v. 2—16) set forth the conditions of blessedness, the ideal life of the kingdom of heaven. Then comes the contrast between the righteousness required for it and that which passed current among the scribes and Pharisees; and this is carried (1) through their way of dealing with the Commandments (v. 17—48), and (2) through the three great elements of the religious life —almsgiving, prayer, and fasting (vi. 1—18). This is followed by warnings against the love of money, and the cares which it brings with it, as fatal to the religious life in all its forms (vi. 19—34). In the precepts of chapter vii. there is less traceable sequence, but its absence is as natural on the supposition of missing links in the chain, as on that of pearls threaded on a string, or a tesselated mosaic made up of fragments. The Sermon, as it stands, might have been spoken in thirty or forty minutes. There is no reason to think that this was the necessary or even customary limit of our Lord's discourses. Assume a discourse somewhat longer than this, heard by a multitude, with no one taking notes at the time, but many trying, it may be some years afterwards, to put on record what they remembered; and then think of the writer of a Gospel coming to collect, with the aid of the Spirit (John xiv. 26), the *disjecta membra* which all held so precious; comparing, if he himself had heard it, what others had written or could tell him with what he recalled; placing together what he thus found with a visible order, where the lines had been left broad and deep; with an order more or less latent, where the trains of thought had been too subtle to catch the attention of the hearers—and we have a process of which the natural outcome is what we find here. On these grounds, then, we may reasonably believe that we have substantially the report of a single discourse, possibly with a few additions from other similar discourses,—the first great prophetic utterance, the first full proclamation of "the perfect law of liberty" (Jas. i. 25), the first systematic protest against the traditions of Pharisees and scribes—that protest in which we find the groundwork of holiness, and the life of Jesus translating itself into speech. That it was not more than this; that it did not reveal doctrines which, from our Lord's own teaching and that of His apostles, we rightly hold to be essential to the true faith of Christians; that it is therefore wrongly made, as some would fain make it, the limit of theology—is explained by the fact that our Lord spake the word as men were able to hear it; that this was the beginning, not the end, of the training of His disciples; that the facts on which the fuller doctrines rested as yet were not. And so He was content to begin with "earthly things," not "heavenly" (John iii. 12), and to look forward to the coming of the Comforter to complete what He had thus begun. Those who would follow His method, must begin as He began; and the Sermon on the Mount, both in its negative and positive elements, is therefore the eternal inheritance of the Church of Christ, at all ages "the milk for babes," even though those of full age may be capable of receiving the food of higher truths.

(3) **Blessed.**—The word differs from that used in Matt. xxiii. 39, xxv. 34, as expressing a permanent state of felicity, rather than the passive reception of a blessing bestowed by another.

**The poor in spirit.**—The limitation, as in "the pure *in heart*," points to the region of life in which the poverty is found. In Luke vi. 20 there is no such qualifying clause, and there the words speak of outward poverty, as in itself a less perilous and therefore happier state than that of riches. Here the blessedness is that of those who, whatever their outward state may be, are in their inward life as those who feel that they have nothing of their own, must be receivers before they give, must be dependent on another's bounty, and be, as it were, the "bedesmen" of the great King. To that temper of mind belongs the "kingdom of heaven," the eternal realities, in this life and the life to come, of that society of which Christ is the Head. Things are sometimes best understood by their contraries, and we may point to the description of the church of Laodicea as showing us the opposite type of character, thinking itself "rich" in the spiritual life, when it is really as "the pauper," destitute of the true riches, blind and naked.

(4) **They that mourn.**—The verb is commonly coupled with weeping (Mark xvi. 10; Luke vi. 25; Jas. iv. 9; Rev. xviii. 15—19). Here, as before, there is an implied, though not an expressed, limitation. The "mourning" is not the sorrow of the world that worketh "death" (2 Cor. vii. 10) for failure, suffering, and the consequences of sin, but the sorrow which flows out in the tears that cleanse, the mourning over sin itself and the stain which it has left upon the soul.

**They shall be comforted.**—The pronoun is emphatic. The promise implies the special comfort (including counsel) which the mourner needs; "comforted" he shall be with the sense of pardon and peace, of restored purity and freedom. We cannot separate the promise from the word which Christendom has chosen (we need not now discuss its accuracy) to express the work of the Holy Ghost the Comforter, still less from the yearning expectation that then prevailed among such of our Lord's hearers as were looking for the "consolation"—*i.e.*, the "comfort"—of Israel (Luke ii. 25).

that mourn: for they shall be comforted. (5) Blessed *are* the meek:[a] for they shall inherit the earth. (6) Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.[b] (7) Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. (8) Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.[c] (9) Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. (10) Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake:[d] for their's is the kingdom of heaven. (11) Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile

c Ps. 24. 4.
a Ps. 37. 11.
b Isa. 65. 13.
d 1 Pet. 3. 14.

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(5) **The meek.**—The word so rendered was probably used by St. Matthew in its popular meaning, without any reference to the definition which ethical writers had given of it, but it may be worth while to recall Aristotle's account of it (*Eth. Nicom.* v. 5) as the character of one who has the passion of resentment under control, and who is therefore tranquil and untroubled, as in part determining the popular use of the word, and in part also explaining the beatitude.

**They shall inherit the earth.**—The words may be partly allusive to the "kingdom of the saints of the Most High" in that prophecy of Daniel (vii. 27) which had done so much to fashion the Messianic expectations of the time. They have, however, a wider and continuous fulfilment. The influence of the meek and self-controlled is in the long-run greater than that of the impulsive and passionate. Their serenity helps them to find the maximum of true joy in all conditions of life; for to them the earth is not a stage for self-assertion and the graspings of desire, but an "inheritance" which they have received from their Father.

Many of the best MSS. invert the order of verses 4 and 5, and this arrangement has, at all events, the merit of bringing out the latent antithesis between the kingdom of heaven in its unseen greatness and the visible inheritance of the earth.

(6) **Which do hunger and thirst.**—We seem in this to hear the lesson which our Lord had learnt from the recent experience of the wilderness. The craving of bodily hunger has become a parable of that higher yearning after righteousness, that thirsting after God, even as the hart desireth the water-brooks, which is certain, in the end, to gain its full fruition. Desires after earthly goods are frustrated, or end in satiety and weariness. To this only belongs the promise that they who thus "hunger and thirst" shall assuredly be filled. The same thoughts meet us again in the Gospel which in many respects is so unlike that of St. Matthew. (Comp. John iv. 14, 32).

(7) **The merciful.**—The thought is the same as that afterwards embodied in the Lord's Prayer. They who are pitiful towards men their brethren are *ipso facto* the objects of the divine pity. The negative aspect of the same truth is presented in Jas. ii. 13. In this case, the promised blessing tends to perpetuate and strengthen the grace which is thus rewarded. No motive to mercy is so constraining as the feeling that we ourselves needed it and have found it.

(8) **Pure in heart.**—Here, as with the poor in spirit, the noun determines the region in which the purity is to be found—the "heart," as representing desires and affections, as the "spirit" represents the will and higher personality. The purity so described is not that which was the ideal of the Pharisee, outward and ceremonial, nor, again, was it limited, as the common language of Christians too often limits it, to the absence of one special form of sensual sin; but it excluded every element of baseness—the impurity of hate or greed of gain, no less than that of lust. Not without cause, however, has the evil of the latter sin so overshadowed the others that it has almost monopolised the name. No single form of evil spreads its taint more deeply than that which "lets in contagion to the inward parts."

**Shall see God.**—Does the promise find its fulfilment only in the beatific vision of the saints in glory, seeing God as He is (1 John iii. 2), knowing even as also we are known (1 Cor. xiii. 12)? Doubtless there, and there only, will be the full fruition which now we wait for; but "purity of heart," so far as it exists, brings with it the power of seeing more than others see in all through which God reveals Himself—the beauty of nature, the inward light, the moral order of the world, the written word, the life and teaching of Christ. Though we see as yet "through a glass," as in a mirror that reflects imperfectly, yet in that glass we behold "the glory of the Lord" (1 Cor. xiii. 12; 2 Cor. iii. 18).

(9) **The peacemakers.**—Our version rightly distinguishes between the temper which is simply "peaceable" in itself (Jas. iii. 17), and this, the higher form of the same grace, acting energetically upon others. To be able to say with power to those who are bitter foes, "Sirs, ye are brethren" (Acts vii. 26), is nobler even than to strive, "as much as lieth in us, to live peaceably with all men" (Rom. xii. 18). Rightly does this beatitude follow on that of the "pure in heart," for it is the absence of all baseness and impurity that gives the power to make peace.

**The children of God.**—Better, *sons of God.* The English version slightly obscures the connection between the promise and the character of Him who had been declared to be the Son of God in the truest and highest sense. Not in the ways which the Tempter had suggested, but in the work of "making peace" between God and man, between Jew and Gentile, even at the price of shedding His own blood (Col. i. 20), was the witness of sonship to be found, and those who were sharers in that work should, according to their capacity, "be called"—*i.e.,* be, and be recognised as, sharers in that sonship.

(10) **Persecuted for righteousness' sake.**—Here again there is a profound significance in the order. The work of the peacemakers is not a light and easy work. Often, as of old, when we "labour for peace," men "make them ready for battle" (Ps. cxx. 7); but not the less is the blessing sure to follow. Amid seeming failure or seeming success, those who are persecuted, not for opinions, but for right conduct, the true martyrs and confessors of righteousness, attain their reward at last. There is something suggestive in the fact that the last promise is the same as the first. We end, as we began, with "the kingdom of heaven;" but the path by which we have been led leads us to see that that includes all the intermediate blessings, of which at first it seemed but the prelude and beginning.

(11) **Blessed are ye.**—Here, for the first time, the beatitude is uttered, not as a general law, but as the portion of the listening disciples to whom the Teacher spoke. The words contain three forms, hardly three successive grades, of suffering: (1) the vague contempt,

you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you [1]falsely,[a] for my sake. (12) Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

(13) Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour,[b] wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. (14) Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. (15) Neither do men light a candle,[c] and put it under [2]a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it

[1] Gr. *lying.*

[a] 1 Pet. 4. 14.

[b] Mark 4. 21; Luke 8. 16; 11. 33.

[2] The word in the original signifieth *a measure containing about a pint less than a peck.*

[c] Mark 9. 50; Luke 14. 34.

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showing itself in gibes and nicknames; (2) persecution generally; (3) deliberate calumnies, such as those of the foul orgies and Thyesteian banquets, which were spread against the believers in Christ in the first two centuries.

**Falsely.**—The word is absent from the best MSS., and was probably added as a safeguard against the thought that a man might claim the reward of the persecuted, even if really guilty of the crimes laid against him.

**For my sake.**—Here, again, there is a more emphatic personal directness. For the abstract "righteousness" we have "for my sake." He forewarns His disciples that they must expect persecution if they follow Him; His very name will be the signal and occasion of it (Acts xiv. 22; 2 Tim. iii. 12).

(12) **Rejoice, and be exceeding glad.**—The second word implies a glorious and exulting joy. The same combination is found, possibly as an actual echo of its use here, in 1 Pet. i. 8; iv. 13; Rev. xix. 7.

**Your reward.**—The teaching of Luke xvii. 10 shows that even here the reward is not "of debt, but of grace" (Rom. iv. 4). It may be added that the temper to which the "reward" is promised practically excludes the possibility of such claim as of right. The reward is for those only who suffer "for righteousness, for Christ," not for those who are calculating on a future compensation.

**In heaven.**—Literally, *in the heavens*, as in the phrase, the "kingdom of heaven," the plural being used possibly with reference to the Jewish belief in three (2 Cor. xii. 2) or seven heavens, more probably as implying, in its grand vagueness (like the "many mansions" of John xiv. 2), the absence of any space-limits to the promised reward. As with the "kingdom of heaven," so here, the word is not to be thrown forward into the far-off future, but points to the unseen eternal world which is even now present to us, and of which all true disciples of Christ are citizens (Phil. iii. 20).

**So persecuted they the prophets.**—Zechariah the son of Jehoiada (2 Chron. xxiv. 21), Jeremiah (Jer. xi. 21; xx. 2), and the sufferers in the reign of Ahab (1 Kings xviii. 4), are the great historical instances. Isaiah may be added from tradition. But the words were, we can hardly doubt, true of the prophetic order as a whole. The witnesses for unwelcome truths have never had, anywhere or at any time, a light or easy task. In the words "the prophets which were before you" there is a tacit assumption that the disciples also to whom He spake were called to a prophetic work. There was to be, in part at least, a fulfilment of the old grand wish, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets!" (Num. xi. 29). The Church of Christ, endowed with the Pentecostal gift, was to be as a prophet to the nations.

(13) **Ye are the salt of the earth.**—The words are spoken to the disciples in their ideal character, as the germ of a new Israel, called to a prophetic work, preserving the earth from moral putrescence and decay. The general reference to this antiseptic action of salt is (as in Col. iv. 6, and possibly in the symbolic act of Elisha, 2 Kings ii. 21) enough to give an adequate meaning to the words, but the special reference to the sacrificial use of salt in Mark ix. 49 (see Note there) makes it probable enough that there was some allusion to that thought also here.

**If the salt have lost his savour.**—The salt commonly used by the Jews of old, as now, came from *Jebel-Usdum*, on the shores of the Dead Sea, and was known as the Salt of Sodom. Maundrell, the Eastern traveller (circ. A.D. 1690), reports that he found lumps of rock-salt there which had become partially flavourless, but I am not aware that this has been confirmed by recent travellers. Common salt, as is well known, will melt if exposed to moisture, but does not lose its saltness. The question is more curious than important, and does not affect the ideal case represented in our Lord's words.

**Wherewith shall it be salted?**—The words imply a relative if not an absolute impossibility. If gifts, graces, blessings, a high calling, and a high work fail, what remains? The parable finds its interpretation in Heb. vi. 1—6.

**To be trodden under foot of men.**—The Talmud shows (Schöttgen *in loc.*) that the salt which had become unfit for sacrificial use in the store-house was sprinkled in wet weather upon the slopes and steps of the temple to prevent the feet of the priests from slipping, and we may accordingly see in our Lord's words a possible reference to this practice.

(14) **The light of the world.**—In its highest or truest sense the word belongs to Christ, and to Him only (John i. 9; viii. 12). The comparison to the "candle" or "lamp" in verse 15 shows, indeed, that even here the disciples are spoken of as shining in the world with a derived brightness flowing to them from the Fount of light.

**A city that is set on an hill.**—Assuming the Sermon on the Mount to have been preached from one of the hills of Galilee near the "horns of Hattin," our Lord may have looked or pointed at Safed, 2,650 feet above the sea, commanding one of the grandest panoramic views in Palestine. It is now one of the four holy cities of the Jews, and probably existed as a fortress in our Lord's time (Thomson's *The Land and the Book*, p. 273). The imagery might, however, come from the prophetic visions of the Zion of the future, idealising the position of the actual Zion (Isa. ii. 2; Mic. iv. 1). No image could so vividly set forth the calling of the Church of Christ as a visible society. For good or for evil, it could not fail to be prominent in the world's history, a city of refuge for the weary, or open to the attacks of the invader.

(15) **Light a candle.**—The word so rendered was probably a portable lamp rather than a candle in the

giveth light unto all that are in the house. (16) Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works,[a] and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

(17) Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. (18) For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass,[b] one jot or one

[a] 1 Pet. 2. 12.

[b] Luke 16. 17.

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common meaning of the word. The candles of the seven-branched candlestick of the Temple were undoubtedly lamps supplied with oil, and so probably were the "candles" of household use. The word is not the same, however, as that used for the "lamps" of the Wise and Foolish Virgins (Matt. xxv. 1), and was applied apparently to the cheaper vessels of the poor rather than to those of the wealthy. Wiclif translates it "lantern."

The image was drawn from objects familiar to all the hearers, and the presence of the article in the Greek, "under *the* bushel," "on *the* candlestick or lampstand," implies the familiarity. Each cottage had one such article of furniture. The "bushel" was a Latin measure, nearly the same as the English peck. It adds to the interest of the illustration to remember that as they were commonly of wood, such articles as these must often have been turned out from the carpenter's shop at Nazareth for the use of its neighbours. It should also be remembered that the self-same word had been applied a short time before by our Lord to the Baptist (John v. 35). His disciples were in this way to continue the Baptist's work.

(16) **Let your light so shine.**—The English form of the sentence is somewhat misleading, or at least ambiguous. It is not simply, Let your light so shine that men may glorify; but, "Thus, like the lamp on its stand, let your light shine. . . ." The motive to publicity is, however, the direct opposite of the temper which led the Pharisee to his ostentatious prayers and almsgiving; not "to be seen of men," and win their praise, but to win men, through our use of the light which we know to be not our own, to glorify the Giver of the light. We have at least a partial fulfilment of the command in the impression made on the heathen world by the new life of the Church when they confessed, in spite of all prejudices, "See how these Christians love one another."

**Your Father which is in heaven.**—The name was in common use among devout Jews, but its first occurrence in our Lord's teaching deserves to be noted. The thought of God as a Father was that which was to inspire men not only when engaged in prayer (Matt. vi. 9), but in the activity of obedience. (See Note on vi. 9.)

(17) Here a new section of the discourse begins, and is carried on to the end of the chapter. From the ideal picture of the life of the society which He came to found, our Lord passes to a protest against the current teaching of the scribes, sometimes adhering to the letter and neglecting the spirit, sometimes overriding even the letter by unauthorised traditions—lowering the standard of righteousness to the level of men's practices, instead of raising their practices to the standard which God had fixed.

**Think not that I am come.**—The words imply that men had begun so to think. The Teacher who came preaching repentance, but also promising forgiveness, was supposed to be what in later times has been called Antinomian, attacking the authority of the two great channels through which the will of God had been revealed. "The Law and the prophets" were popularly equivalent to the whole of the Old Testament, though a strict classification required the addition of the *Hagiographa*, or "holy writings," *i.e.*, the poetical and miscellaneous books.

**I am not come.**—Better, *I came not.* The words might be naturally used by any teacher conscious of a mission, but they gain a new meaning when we remember that He who so spake was emphatically "He that should come;" that "He came into the world" not in the same sense as other men, but in a manner absolutely His own.

**Not . . . to destroy, but to fulfil.**—Explained by the immediate context, the words would seem to point chiefly to our Lord's work as a teacher. He came to fill up what was lacking, to develop hints and germs of truth, to turn rules into principles. Interpreted on a wider scale, He came to "fulfil the Law and prophets," as He came "to fulfil all righteousness" (iii. 15) by a perfect obedience to its precepts, to fulfil whatever in it was typical of Himself and His work by presenting the realities. The further thought that He came to fulfil what are called the Messianic prophecies hardly comes within the range of the words. No one could dream for a moment that the Christ could do anything else, and throughout the whole discourse there is no reference to those predictions. The prophets are named, partly in conformity with usage, partly in their character as ethical teachers, expounding and spiritualising the Law, and preparing the way for a further and fuller development.

It may be noted as a singular instance of the boldness of some of the early heretics, that Marcion, who rejected the Old Testament altogether, maintained that these words had been altered by the Judaisers of the apostolic age, and that the true reading was, "Think ye that I came to fulfil the Law or the prophets? I came not to fulfil, but to destroy."

(18) **Verily.**—The first occurrence in the Gospel of the word so common in our Lord's teaching seems the right place for dwelling on its meaning. It is the familiar *Amen* of the Church's worship—the word which had been used in the same way in that of the wilderness (Num. v. 22; Deut. xxvii. 15) and of the Temple (Ps. xli. 13; lxxii. 19, *et al.*). Coming from the Hebrew root for "fixed, steadfast, true," it was used for solemn affirmation or solemn prayer. "So is it," or "so be it." For the most part, the Greek LXX. translates it; but in 1 Chron. xvi. 36, and Neh. v. 13, it appears in its Hebrew form. From the worship of the synagogue it passed into that of the Christian Church, and by the time the Gospels were written had become so familiar that it was used without hesitation by all the Evangelists, sometimes singly, sometimes (uniformly in St. John) with the emphasis of reduplication.

**Till heaven and earth pass.**—The formula was probably one in common use by our Lord to express the unchangeableness of the divine word. It was afterwards used, we must remember, by our Lord, with even augmented force, in reference to His own words (Matt. xxiv. 35; Mark xiii. 31; Luke xxi. 33).

**One jot or one tittle.**—The "jot" is the Greek *iota* (ι), the Hebrew *yod* (י), the smallest of all the letters of tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. (19) Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments,[a] and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them,* the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (20) For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness*

[a] Jam. 2. 10.

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the alphabet. The "tittle" was one of the smaller strokes, or twists of other letters, such, *e.g.*, as distinguished ד (D) from ר (R), or כ (K) from ב (B). Jewish Rabbis used to caution their scholars against so writing as to cause one letter to be mistaken for another, and to give examples of passages from the Law in which such a mistake would turn a divine truth into nonsense or blasphemy. The *yod* in its turn was equally important. It distinguished Joshua from Hoshea, Sarai from Sarah. The Jews had indeed a strange legend that its insertion in the former name was given as a compensation for its exclusion from the latter. The meaning is obvious enough, "Nothing truly belonging to the Law, however seemingly trivial, shall drift away and be forgotten until it has done all that it was meant to do."

**Till all be fulfilled.**—Literally, *Till all things have come to pass.* The words in the English version suggest an identity with the "fulfil" of verse 17, which is not found in the Greek. The same formula is used in the Greek of Matt. xxiv. 34. The "all things" in both cases are the great facts of our Lord's life, death, resurrection, and the establishment of the kingdom of God. So taken, we find that the words do not assert, as at first they seem to do, the perpetual obligation even of the details of the Law, but the limit up to which the obligation was to last; and they are therefore not inconsistent with the words which speak of the system of the Law as a whole as "decaying and waxing old, and ready to vanish away" (Heb. viii. 13). The two "untils" have each of them their significance. Each "jot" or "tittle" must first complete its work; then, and not till then, will it pass away.

(19) **Shall break one of these least commandments.**—The words seem at first to imply that even the ceremonial law was to be binding in its full extent upon Christ's disciples. The usage of the time, however, confined the word to the moral laws of God (as in Ecclus. xxxii. 23, 24), and throughout the New Testament it is never used in any other sense, with the possible exception of Heb. vii. 5, 16 (comp. especially Rom. xiii. 9; 1 Cor. vii. 19). And the context, which proceeds at once to deal with moral laws and does not touch on ceremonial, is in accordance with this meaning. The "least commandments," then, are those which seemed trivial, yet were really great—the control of thoughts, desires, words, as compared with the apparently greater commands that dealt with acts. The reference to "teaching" shows that our Lord was speaking to His disciples, as the future instructors of mankind, and the obvious import of His words is that they were to raise, not lower, the standard of righteousness which had been recognised previously.

**Shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.**—The consequence of tampering with the great laws of duty, or the least laws, which are practically great, is described in terms at once severe and gentle; gentle, because the sentence, where the guilt is not wilful, or is repented of, is not one of absolute exclusion from the kingdom; severe in so far as being the "least" in that kingdom, the object of pity or sorrow to others, involved a severe humiliation to those who aimed at being the highest. To that condemnation many in every age of the Church have been liable, the Antinomian fanatic and the Jesuit casuist standing so far on the same footing.

**Whosoever shall do and teach.**—Here again the teaching work of the disciples is prominent. The combination is in this case even more significant than in the other. Not right doing only, still less right teaching only, but both together, made up the ideal of the preacher's work.

**Great.**—Not "greatest." The avoidance of the latter word, interpreted by the later teaching of xviii. 4, would seem to have been deliberate. Men might aim at a positive standard of the greatness of the true teacher and the true worker, but the conscious aim at being "greatest" was self-frustrating. That honour belonged to him only who was all unconscious that he had any claim to it.

(20) **Shall exceed.**—Better, *Shall abound more than.*

**Scribes and Pharisees.**—Here, for the first time, the scribes are mentioned in our Lord's teaching. The frequent combination of the two words (thirteen times in the first three Gospels) implies that for the most part they were of the school of the Pharisees, just as the "chief priests" were, for the most part, of that of the Sadducees. Where "scribes and chief priests" are united, it is with a different import, as the two chief divisions of the Sanhedrim, or Great Council. The New Testament use of the word differs from the Old. There the scribe is simply the man who writes, the secretary or registrar of the king's edicts and official documents (2 Sam. viii. 17; xx. 25; 2 Kings xviii. 18). After the return of Babylon, as in the case of Ezra (Ezra vii. 6, 12), it was used first of the transcribers and editors of the sacred books, and then, by a natural transition, of their interpreters; and this is the dominant sense of the word in the New Testament. As interpreters they were much occupied with the traditional comments of previous teachers, and these as descending more into particulars, and so affording a better basis for a casuistic system, had come to usurp the rightful place of the Law. As far as the three Gospels are concerned this is the first direct protest of our Lord against their teaching. St. John's record, however, shows that the conflict had begun already in Jerusalem (John v. 10), and that the Sabbath question was prominent in it.

**Ye shall in no case enter . . .**—The "kingdom of heaven" is here neither what we speak of as the visible Church—for there the evil and the good grow together till the harvest—nor yet the Church triumphant in the far future. It stands here rather for the ideal and invisible Church on earth—that which answers to its name, that to which belong the blessings and the promises. Into that Church none enter who are content with an outward conventional standard of righteousness. All who strive after a high standard, sooner or later, in spite of wanderings and mistakes, find their way into it (Matt. xxv. 34; John vii. 17).

of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

(21) Ye have heard that it was said by them[1] of old time, Thou shalt not kill;[a] and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: (22) but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever

[1] Or, *to them.*

[a] Ex. 20. 13; Deut. 5. 17.

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(21) **By them of old time.**—There is no reasonable doubt that the marginal reading, *to them of old time,* is right. The construction is identical with that of Rom. ix. 12, 26; Gal. iii. 16; Rev. vi. 11; ix. 4. Two questions present themselves for answer: (1) Who were "they of old time"? (2) Who was the speaker of the words quoted? (1) The words are very general, and, as interpreted by the use of "old time" in Acts xv. 21, seem to point to the time when synagogues began to be established, *i.e.,* after the return from Babylon. (2) The impersonal form, the contrast between "it was said," and "I say unto you," the tone of authority imposing a new law for that which it supersedes, seem conclusive against referring the words, even when they are found in the Law, to that Law as given by God through Moses. Stress is laid on the words "Ye heard that it was said." "This was the report of the Law given you by your teachers in school and synagogue. I give you another and truer report. Not what you so heard, but what I now say unto you is the true completion of the Law and the Prophets, and therefore the abiding law of my kingdom."

**Whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment.**—The fact that these words are not found in the Old Testament confirms the view that our Lord is speaking of the traditional comments on the Law, and not of the Law itself. The phrase "in danger" had a somewhat more technical sense in A.D. 1611 than it has now, and meant "legally liable to." The "judgment" spoken of was that of the local courts of Deut. xvi. 18. They had the power of capital punishment, but the special form of death by stoning was reserved for the Sanhedrim, or Council.

(22) **I say unto you.**—The *I* is emphasized in the Greek. It was this probably that, more than anything else, led to the feeling of wonder expressed in Matt. vii. 28, 29. The scribe in his teaching invariably referred to this Rabbi and that; the new Teacher spoke as one having a higher authority of His own.

**Angry . . . without a cause.**—The last three words are wanting in many of the best MSS. They may have been inserted to soften down the apparent harshness of the teaching; but if so, it must have been at an early date—before the fourth century. They may, on the other hand, have been in the text originally, and struck out, as giving too wide a margin to vain and vague excuses. Ethically, the teaching is not that the emotion of anger, with or without a cause, stands on the same level of guilt with murder, but that the former so soon expands and explodes into the latter, that it will be brought to trial and sentenced according to the merits of each case, the occasion of the anger, the degree in which it has been checked or cherished, and the like. As no earthly tribunal can take cognisance of emotions as such, the "judgment" here is clearly that of the Unseen Judge dealing with offences which in His eyes are of the same character as those which come before the human judges. "Hates any man the thing he would not kill?"

**Raca.**—As far as the dictionary sense of the word goes, it is the same as that of the "*vain* fellows" of Judg. ix. 4; xi. 3; Prov. xii. 11; but all words of abuse depend for their full force on popular association, and *raca,* like words of kindred meaning among ourselves, was in common use as expressing not anger only but insolent contempt. The temper condemned is that in which anger has so far gained the mastery that we no longer recognise a "brother" in the man who has offended us, but look on him with malignant scorn.

**The council.**—Offences of this kind are placed by our Lord on the same level as those which came before the great court of the Sanhedrim. That word, though it looks like Hebrew, is really only a transliterated form of the Greek word for council. The court consisted of seventy or seventy-two members, with a president and vice-president, and was made up of the heads of the twenty-four courses of the priests, with forty-six or forty-eight (how chosen it is not known) from the "elders" and "scribes." Like the Areopagus at Athens, it took cognisance—as in the case of our Lord (Matt. xxvi. 65) and Stephen (Acts vi. 13)—of blasphemy and other like offences, and its peculiar prerogative was that it could order death by stoning. The point of our Lord's teaching was, therefore, that to scorn God's image in man is to do dishonour to God Himself. We cannot truly "fear God" unless we also "honour all men" (1 Pet. ii. 17). The reverence for humanity as such must extend even to the man who has most provoked us. In the unseen eternal world the want of that reverence has its own appropriate punishment.

**Thou fool.**—The Greek word so rendered agrees accidentally in its consonants with the Hebrew word translated "rebel" (*m're*) in Num. xx. 10, and hence it has been thought by some that we have here, as with *raca,* a common *Hebrew* term of opprobrium. There is no evidence, however, that the word was thus used, and it is more probable that the Greek is a translation of some word which, like the "fool" of the Old Testament, implied, as in Ps. xiv. 1, utter godlessness as well as lack of intellectual wisdom. With that meaning it embodied the temper, not, like that represented by *raca,* of petulant contempt, but of fixed and settled hatred. That it was the temper and not the utterance of the mere syllables which our Lord condemned is seen in that He Himself used the word of the scribes and Pharisees (Matt. xxiii. 17, 19), and St. Paul of the sceptical Greek materialist (1 Cor. xv. 36). The self-same word might spring from a righteous indignation or from malignant hatred.

**Of hell fire.**—Literally, *of the Gehenna of fire.* Great confusion has arisen here and elsewhere from the use of the same English word for two Greek words of very different meanings: (1) *Hades,* answering to the *Sheol* (also for the most part translated "hell") of the Old Testament, the unseen world, the region or state of the dead, without any reference to their blessedness or misery; (2) *Gehenna,* which had come to represent among the later Jews (not in the time of any Old Testament writer) the place of future punishment. The history of the word is worth studying. Originally, it was the Greek form of *Ge-hinnom* (the Valley of Hinnom, sometimes of the "son" or the "children" of Hinnom), and was applied to a narrow gorge on the south of Jerusalem (Josh. xv. 8).

shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. (23) Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; (24) leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. (25) Agree with thine adversary quickly,[a] whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. (26) Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

[a] Luke 12. 58.

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There Solomon erected a high place for Molech (1 Kings xi. 7). There the fires of that god had received their bloody offerings of infant sacrifice under Ahaz and Manasseh (2 Kings xvi. 3; 2 Chron. xxviii. 3; xxxiii. 6). Josiah, in his great work of reformation, defiled it, probably by casting the bones of the dead and other filth upon it (2 Kings xxiii. 10—14); and the Jews on their return from captivity showed their abhorrence of the idolatry of their fathers by making it, as it were, the place where they cast out all the refuse of the city. Outwardly, it must have been foul to sight and smell, and thus it became, before our Lord's time, a parable of the final state of those in whom all has become vile and refuse. The thought first appears in the Targum or Paraphrase of Isa. xxxiii. 14 ("Gehenna is the eternal fire"). It is often said that fires which were kept burning to consume the solid refuse added to the horror of the scene; but of this, though it is suggested by this passage and Mark ix. 48, there is no adequate evidence. Here the analogy of the previous clauses suggests also the thought that the bodies of great criminals were sometimes deprived of burial rites, and cast out into the Valley of Hinnom; but of this, too, there is no evidence, though it is in itself probable enough. In any case, the meaning of the clause is obvious. Our passing words, expressing states of feeling, and not the overt act of murder only, are subject to the judgment of the Eternal Judge, and may bring us into a guilt and a penalty like that of the vilest criminals.

(23) **If thou bring thy gift to the altar.**—Literally, *If thou shouldst be offering.* Our Lord was speaking to Jews as such, and paints, therefore, as it were, a scene in the Jewish Temple. The worshipper is about to offer a "gift" (the most generic term seems intentionally used to represent any kind of offering), and stands at the altar with the priest waiting to do his work. That is the right time for recollection and self-scrutiny. The worshipper is to ask himself, not whether he has a ground of complaint against any one, but whether any one has cause of complaint against him. This, and not the other, is the right question at such a moment—has he injured his neighbour by act, or spoken bitter words of him?

(24) **Leave there thy gift.**—The words describe an act which would appear to men as a breach of liturgical propriety. To leave the gift and the priest, the act of sacrifice unfinished, would be strange and startling, yet that, our Lord teaches, were better than to sacrifice with the sense of a wrong unconfessed and unatoned for, and, *à fortiori,* better than the deeper evil of not being ready to forgive. The Talmud gives a curious rule, to which the words may perhaps allude: "If a man is on the point of offering the Passover, and remembers that there is any leaven left in the house, let him return to his house, and remove it, and then come and finish the Passover" (*Pesachim,* f. 49). What the scribes laid down as a duty in regard to the "leaven of bread," our Lord applies to the leaven of malice and wickedness.

**Be reconciled.**—It is not enough to see in this only a command to remove ill-will and enmity from our own mind, though that, of course, is implied. There must be also confession of wrong and the endeavour to make amends, to bring about, as far as in us lies, reconciliation, or at-one-ment.

(25) **Agree with thine adversary.**—The imagery is changed, and returns to that of human tribunals, which has met us in verse 22. The man whom we have wronged appears as the "adversary," the prosecutor bringing his charge against us. The impulse of the natural man at such a time, even if conscious of wrong, is to make the best of his case, to prevaricate, to recriminate. The truer wisdom, Christ teaches, is to "agree"—better, *to be on good terms with*—show our own good will, and so win his. The whole teaching, it is obvious, is addressed to one who *has* done wrong. The treatment of a false charge involves different considerations.

**The officer.**—In this case, the officer of the court, the gaoler.

In the application of the words, the judge is clearly God, and the officers, those (angels or others) who execute His judgment, and the "adversary," those whom we have wronged, leaving the wrong unredressed. In 1 Pet. v. 8 the devil is described as the great "adversary," and that meaning is, perhaps, not excluded, though it is not prominent, here. Any evil deed becomes in the end as an accusing Satan, bearing its witness against us; and Satan himself is the embodiment of all such accusers.

(26) **The uttermost farthing.**—The Greek word is derived from the Latin *quadrans,* the fourth part of the Roman *as,* a small copper or bronze coin which had become common in Palestine. The "mite," half the *quadrans* (Mark xii. 42), was the smallest coin in circulation. The "farthing" of Matt. x. 29 is a different word, and was applied to the tenth part of the drachma.

Do the words point to a terminable or to an endless punishment? In the frame-work of the similitude such a sentence would not involve perpetual imprisonment, if only the condemned could get together the money wherewith to pay his debt or fine; and we might infer, as Romanist divines have inferred, that such a payment, to be followed by liberation, was possible in the divine judgment. But in practice, unless the man had friends or property, the sentence would, for the most part, involve a life-long punishment. And the question may well be asked, when we turn to the realities shadowed forth in the parable, Can a man pay the "uttermost farthing" in that unseen world? Does he pay by enduring for a given time a given measure of suffering, bodily or spiritual? Can he there find others to pay it for him? Do not the words "till *thou* hast paid" exclude the thought of their intervention as availing to stay the

(27) Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:[a] (28) but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. (29) And if thy right eye offend thee,[1] pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee:[b] for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell. (30) And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell. (31) It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife,[c] let him give

[a] Ex. 20. 14.

[1] Or, *do cause thee to offend.*

[b] ch. 18. 8; Mark 9. 47.

[c] Deut. 24. 1.

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full action of the great law of retribution? These questions must, for the most part, be so answered as to diminish the force of the first hasty inference. If hope is not shut out altogether, it is because we cannot absolutely answer the first question in the negative. There *may* be a suffering that works repentance, and the repentance may lead to peace and pardon—there *may* be, but that is the very utmost that can be said. It is noticeable that the word "prison" is that used in 1 Pet. iii. 19, where the "spirits in prison" are, almost beyond a doubt, represented as the objects of a dispensation that proclaimed even there the good news of salvation. But the whole tone of the passage is that of one who seeks to deepen the sense of danger, not to make light of it, to make men feel that they cannot pay their debt, though God may forgive it freely, accepting faith in Him in lieu of payment.

(27) **By them of old time.**—Omitted in the best MSS. If retained, translate as before, *to them of old time.* It was probably inserted for the sake of conformity with verse 21. Here the words are simply those of the divine commandment, but it is given as it was taught in the Rabbinic schools, simply in the narrowness of the letter, without any perception that here too the commandment was "exceeding broad." It is with that teaching, as before, that our Lord contrasts His own.

(28) **To lust after her.**—The intent is more strongly marked in the Greek than in the English. It is not the passing glance, not even the momentary impulse of desire, but the continued gaze by which the impulse is deliberately cherished till it becomes a passion. This noble and beautiful teaching, it has often been remarked, and by way of disparagement, is found elsewhere. Such disparagement is out of place. By the mercy of God the Light that "lighteth every man" has led men to recognise the truth thus asserted, and parallels to it may be found in the writings of Confucius, Seneca, Epictetus, and even of the Jewish Rabbis themselves. The words of Juvenal closely express the general sentiment:—

> "Scelus intra se tacitus qui cogitat ullum,
> Facti crimen habet."
> ["Who in his breast a guilty thought doth cherish,
> He bears the guilt of action."]

Our Lord's words speak primarily of "adultery," but are, of course, applicable to every form of sensual impurity.

(29) **If thy right eye offend thee.**—The Greek verb means, strictly, to cause another to stumble or fall into a snare, and this was probably the sense in which the translators used the word "offend." It is doubtful, however, whether it ever had this factitive sense in English outside the Authorised version, and the common use of the word gives so different a meaning that it cannot be regarded as a happy rendering. The difficulty of finding an equivalent is shown by the variations in the successive English versions: "offend," in Tyndal's; "hinder thee," in Cranmer's; "cause thee to offend," in the Geneva; "scandalise," in the Rhemish; "offend," again in the Authorised version. Of these the Geneva is, beyond doubt, the best.

**Pluck it out.**—The bold severity of the phrase excludes a literal interpretation. The seat of the evil lies in the will, not in the organ of sense or action, and the removal of the instrument might leave the inward taint unpurified. What is meant is, that any sense, when it ministers to sin is an evil and not a good, the loss of which would be the truest gain. Translated into modern language, we are warned that taste, culture, æsthetic refinement may but make our guilt and our punishment more tremendous. It were better to be without them than

> "Propter vitam vivendi perdere causas."
> ["And for life's sake to lose life's noblest ends."]

**It is profitable.**—The element of prudential self-love, of a calculation of profit and loss, is not excluded from Christian motives. As addressed to a nation immersed in the pursuit of gain, it conveys the stern, yet pertinent, warning—"If you must think of profit, make your calculations wisely."

**Hell.**—Gehenna, as in verse 22. The language is still symbolical. The horrid picture of a human body thrown into the foul, offal-fed flame of the Valley of Hinnom is again a parable of something more terrible than itself.

(30) **If thy right hand offend thee.**—The repetition of the same form of warning has, in part, the emphasis of iteration, but it points also to a distinct danger. Not the senses only, through which we receive impressions, but the gifts and energies which issue in action, may become temptations to evil; and in that case, if the choice must be made, it were better to forfeit them. The true remedy is, of course, found in so directing the will that eye and hand may each do its work in obedience to the law of righteousness.

(31) **It hath been said.**—The better MSS. give, "*But* it was said," as though stating an implied objection to the previous teaching. Men might think that they could avoid the sin of adultery by taking the easy course of divorcing one wife before marrying another.

**Whosoever shall put away . . .**—The quotation is given as the popular Rabbinic explanation of Deut. xxiv. 1, which, as our Lord teaches in Matt. xix. 8, was given, on account of the hardness of men's hearts, to prevent yet greater evils. The words of the precept were vague—"If she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her," and the two school of casuists took opposite views of its meaning. The stricter party of Shammai held that the "uncleanness" meant simply unchastity before or after marriage. The followers of Hillel held, on the other hand (as Milton among Christian teachers), that anything that made the company of the wife distasteful was a sufficient ground for repudiation. Even a moralist generally so pure and noble as the son of Sirach, took her a writing of divorcement: (32) but I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife,[a] saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

(33) Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself,[b] but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: (34) but I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's

[a] Luke 16. 18; 1 Cor. 7. 10.

[b] Ex. 20. 7; Lev. 19. 12; Deut. 5. 11.

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in this matter the laxer view—"If she go not as thou wouldest have her, cut her off from thy flesh, and give her a bill of divorce, and let her go" (Ecclus. xxv. 26). It is noteworthy that our Lord, whose teaching, especially as regards the Sabbath question, might have been, for the most part, claimed by the school of Hillel, on this matter of divorce stamps the impress of His approval on the teaching of his rival.

(32) **Saving for the cause of fornication.**—The most generic term seems intentionally used to include ante-nuptial as well as post-nuptial sin, possibly, indeed, with reference to the former only, seeing that the strict letter of the Law of Moses made death the punishment of the latter, and so excluded the possibility of the adultery of a second marriage. The words *causeth her to commit adultery* imply that the "putting away" was legally a divorce *à vinculo*, leaving the wife, and *à fortiori* the husband, at liberty to marry again; for otherwise she could not have incurred the guilt of adultery by a second marriage: but it asserts that in such a case, when divorce was obtained on any other ground than the specific sin which violated the essence of the marriage contract, man's law (even that of Moses) was at variance with the true eternal law of God.

**Whosoever shall marry her that is divorced.**—The Greek is less definite, and may be rendered either "a woman who has been put away," or better, "her when she has been put away." Those who take the former construction, infer from it the absolute unlawfulness of marriage with a divorced woman under any circumstances whatever; some holding that the husband is under the same restrictions, *i.e.*, that the *vinculum matrimonii* is absolutely indissoluble; while others teach that in the excepted case, both the husband and the wife gain the right to contract a second marriage. The Romish Church, in theory, takes the former view, the Greek and most Reformed Churches the latter; while some codes, like those of some countries in modern Europe, go back to the looser interpretation of Deut. xxiv. 1, and allow the divorce *à vinculo* for many lesser causes than incontinence. Of these contending views, that which is intermediate between the two extremes seems to be most in harmony with the true meaning of our Lord's words. The words "put away" would necessarily convey to His Jewish hearers the idea of an entire dissolution of the marriage union, leaving both parties free to contract a fresh marriage; and if it were not so, then the case in which He specially permits that dissolution would stand on the same level as the others. The injured husband would still be bound to the wife who had broken the vow which was of the essence of the marriage-contract. But if he was free to marry again, then the guilt of adultery could not possibly attach to her subsequent marriage with another. The context, therefore, requires us to restrict that guilt to the case of a wife divorced for other reasons, such as Jewish casuistry looked on as adequate. This, then, seems the true law of divorce for the Church of Christ as such to recognise. The question as to how far national legislation may permit divorce for other causes, such as cruelty or desertion, seems to stand on a different footing, and must be discussed on different grounds. In proportion as the "hardness of heart" which made the wider license the least of two evils prevails now, it may be not only expedient, but right and necessary, though it implies a standard of morals lower than the law of Christ, to meet it, as it was met of old, by a like reluctant permission.

(33) **By them of old time.**—Read, *to them of old time*, as before. Here, again, the reference is to the letter of the Law as taught by the Rabbis, who did not go beyond it to its wider spirit. To them the Third Commandment was simply a prohibition of perjury, as the Sixth was of murder, or the Seventh of adultery. They did not see that the holy name (Lev. xix. 12) might be profaned in other ways, even when it was not uttered; and they expressly or tacitly allowed (See Philo, *De Special. Legg.*) many forms of oath in which it was not named, as with the view of guarding it from desecration. Lastly, out of the many forms thus sanctioned (as here and in xxiii. 16—22) they selected some as binding, and others as not binding, and thus by a casuistry at once subtle, irrational, and dishonest, tampered with men's sense of truthfulness.

(34) **Swear not at all.**—Not a few interpreters, and even whole Christian communities, as *e.g.* the Society of Friends, see in these words, and in Jas. v. 12, a formal prohibition of all oaths, either promissory or evidential, and look on the general practice of Christians, and the formal teaching of the Church of England in her Articles (*Art.* XXXIX.), as simply an acquiescence in evil. The first impression made by the words is indeed so strongly in their favour that the scruples of such men ought to be dealt with (as English legislation has at last dealt with them) with great tenderness. Their conclusion is, however, it is believed, mistaken: (1) Because, were it true, then in this instance our Lord would be directly repealing part of the moral law given by Moses, instead of completing and expanding it, as in the case of the Sixth and Seventh Commandments. He would be destroying, not fulfilling. (2) Because our Lord himself answered, when He had before been silent, to a solemn formal adjuration (Matt. xxvi. 63, 64), and St. Paul repeatedly uses such forms of attestation (Rom. i. 9; 1 Cor. xv. 31; 2 Cor. i. 23; Gal. i. 20; Phil. i. 8). (3) Because the context shows that the sin which our Lord condemned was the light use of oaths in common speech, and with no real thought as to their meaning. Such oaths practically involved irreverence, and were therefore inconsistent with the fear of God. The real purpose of an oath is to intensify that fear by bringing the thought of God's presence home to men at the very time they take them, and they are therefore rightly used when they attain that end. Practically, it must be admitted that the needless multiplication of oaths, both evidential and promissory, on trivial occasions, has tended, and still tends, to weaken awe and impair men's reverence for truth, and we may rejoice when their number is diminished. In an ideal Christian society no oaths would be needed, for every word would

throne: (35) nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. (36) Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. (37) But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay:[a] for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

(38) Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:[b] (39) but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil:[c] but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. (40) And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloke also.

[a] Jam. 5. 12.

[b] Ex. 21. 24; Lev. 24. 20; Deut. 19. 21.

[c] Luke 6. 29; Rom. 12. 17; 1 Cor. 6. 7.

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be spoken as by those who knew that the Eternal Judge was hearing them.

(34—35) **Neither by heaven; . . . nor by the earth; . . . neither by Jerusalem.**—Other formulæ of oaths meet us in Matt. xxiii. 16—22; Jas. v. 12. It is not easy at first to understand the thought that underlies such modes of speech. When men swear by God, or the name of Jehovah, there is an implied appeal to the Supreme Ruler. We invoke Him (as in the English form, "So help me God") to assist and bless us according to the measure of our truthfulness, or to punish us if we speak falsely. But to swear by a *thing* that has no power or life seems almost unintelligible, unless the thing invoked be regarded as endowed in idea with a mysterious holiness and a power to bless and curse. Once in use, it was natural that men under a system like that of Israel, or, we may add, of Christendom, should employ them as convenient symbols intensifying affirmation, and yet not involving the speaker in the guilt of perjury or in the profane utterance of the divine name. Our Lord deals with all such formulæ in the same way. If they have any force at all, it is because they imply a reference to the Eternal. Heaven is His throne, and earth is His footstool (the words are a citation from Isa. lxvi. 1), and Jerusalem is the city of the great King. To use them lightly is, therefore, to profane the holy name which they imply. Men do not guard themselves either against irreverence or perjury by such expedients.

(36) **By thy head.**—This is apparently chosen as an extreme instance of a common oath in which men found no reference to God. Yet here, too, nothing but an implied reference to Him fits it to be an oath at all. He made us, and not we ourselves, and the hairs of our head are not only numbered, but are subject in all their changes to His laws, and not to our volition.

(37) **Let your communication.**—One of the few instances in which our translators seem to have preferred a somewhat pedantic Latin word for the more literal and homely English *speech.* (Comp. Luke xxiv. 17.)

**Yea, yea.**—St. James reproduces the precept in v. 12 of his Epistle, but the phrase is found in the Talmud, and was probably proverbial. In all common speech a man's words should be as good as his oath. Yes should mean yes, and No should mean no, even though there be no oath to strengthen it.

**Cometh of evil.**—The Greek may (as in the Lord's Prayer, "Deliver us from evil") be either neuter, "from evil in the abstract," or masculine, "from the evil one." With some hesitation, and guided chiefly by Matt. xiii. 19—38, I accept the latter as the more probable. These devices of fantastic oaths come not from Him who is the Truth, but from him who "when he speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own" (John viii. 44).

(38) **An eye for an eye.**—Here again the scribes first took their stand on the letter, regardless of the aim and purpose, of the Law, and then expanded it in a wrong direction. As originally given, it was a check on the "wild justice" of revenge. It said, where the equilibrium of right had been disturbed by outrage, that the work of the judge was not to do more than restore the equilibrium, unless, as in the case of theft, some further penalty was necessary for the prevention of crime. It was, in its essence, a limit in both directions. Not less than the "eye for an eye," for that might lead to connivance in guilt; not more, for that would open a fresh score of wrong. The scribes in their popular casuistry made the rule one not of judicial action only, but of private retaliation; and it was thus made the sanction of the vindictive temper that forgives nothing.

(39) **Resist not evil.**—The Greek, as before in verse 37, may be either masculine or neuter, and followed as it is by "whosoever," the former seems preferable; only here it is not "the evil one," with the emphasis of pre-eminence, but, as in 1 Cor. v. 13, the human evil-doer. Of that mightier "evil one" we are emphatically told that it is our duty to resist him (Jas. iv. 7).

**Shall smite.**—The word was used of blows with the hand or with a stick, and for such blows fines from a shekel upwards were imposed by Jewish courts.

**Turn to him the other also.**—We all quote and admire the words as painting an ideal meekness. But most men feel also that they cannot act on them literally; that to make the attempt, as has been done by some whom the world calls dreamers or fanatics, would throw society into confusion and make the meek the victims. The question meets us, therefore, Were they meant to be obeyed in the letter; and if not, what do they command? And the answer is found (1) in remembering that our Lord Himself, when smitten by the servant of the high priest, protested, though He did not resist (John xviii. 22, 23), and that St. Paul, under like outrage, was vehement in his rebuke (Acts xxiii. 3); and (2) in the fact that the whole context shows that the Sermon on the Mount is not a code of laws, but the assertion of principles. And the principle in this matter is clearly and simply this, that the disciple of Christ, when he has suffered wrong, is to eliminate altogether from his motives the natural desire to retaliate or accuse. As far as he himself is concerned, he must be prepared, in language which, because it is above our common human strain, has stamped itself on the hearts and memories of men, to turn the left cheek when the right has been smitten. But the man who has been wronged has other duties which he cannot rightly ignore. The law of the Eternal has to be asserted, society to be protected, the offender to be reclaimed, and these may well justify—though personal animosity does not—protest, prosecution, punishment.

(40) **If any man will sue thee at the law.**—The Greek is somewhat stronger: *If a man will go*—i.e., *is bent on going—to law with thee.* The verse presents another aspect of the same temper of forbearance. Not in regard to acts of violence only, but also in dealing with the petty litigation that disturbs so many men's peace, it is better to yield than to insist on rights. St. Paul

(41) And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. (42) Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.[a]

(43) Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour,[b] and hate thine enemy. (44) But I say unto you, Love your enemies,[c] bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;[d] (45) that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he

c Luke 6. 27.

a Deut. 15. 8.

d Luke 23. 34; Acts 7. 60.

b Lev. 19. 18.

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gives the same counsel to the believers at Corinth: "Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?" (1 Cor. vi. 7). Here also, of course, the precept, absolutely binding, as far as self-interest is concerned, may be traversed by higher considerations.

**Coat.**—The close-fitting tunic worn next the body.

**Cloke.**—The outer flowing mantle, the more costly garment of the two. (Comp. John xix. 23, and the combination of the two words, in Acts ix. 39, "coats and garments.") The meaning of the illustration is obvious. It is wise rather to surrender more than is demanded, than to disturb the calm of our own spirit by wrangling and debate.

(41) **Whosoever shall compel thee.**—The Greek word implies the special compulsion of forced service as courier or messenger under Government, and was imported from the Persian postal system, organised on the plan of employing men thus impressed to convey Government dispatches from stage to stage (Herod. viii. 98). The use of the illustration here would seem to imply the adoption of the same system by the Roman Government under the empire. Roman soldiers and their horses were billeted on Jewish householders. Others were impressed for service of longer or shorter duration.

**A mile.**—The influence of Rome is shown by the use of the Latin word (slightly altered) for the *mille passuum*, the thousand paces which made up a Roman mile—about 142 yards short of an English statute mile. It is interesting to note a like illustration of the temper that yields to compulsion of this kind, rather than struggle or resist, in the teaching of the Stoic Epictetus—"Should there be a forced service, and a soldier should lay hold on thee, let him work his will; do not resist or murmur" (*Diss.* IV., i. 79).

(42) **Give to him that asketh.**—Here again our Lord teaches us by the method of a seeming paradox, and enforces a principle binding upon every one in the form of a rule which in its letter is binding upon no man. Were we to give to all men what they ask, we should in many cases be cursing, not blessing, them with our gifts. Not so does our Father give us what we ask in prayer; not so did Christ grant the prayers of His disciples. That which the words really teach as the ideal of the perfect life which we ought to aim at, is the loving and the giving temper that sees in every request made to us the expression of a want of some kind, which we are to consider as a call to thoughtful inquiry how best to meet the want, giving what is asked for if we honestly believe that it is really for the good of him who asks, giving something else if that would seem to be really better for him. Rightly understood, the words do not bid us idly give alms to the idle or the impostor; and St. Paul's rule, "If a man will not work, neither let him eat" (2 Thess. iii. 10), is not a departure from the law of Christ, but its truest application and fulfilment.

**From him that would borrow.**—The force of the precept depends on its connection with the Jewish Law, which forbade not only what we call usury, *i.e.*, excessive interest, but all interest on loans where debtor and creditor alike were Israelites (Exod. xxii. 25; Lev. xxv. 37; Deut. xxiii. 19, 20). From our modern point of view that law cannot be regarded as in harmony with the present order of society, nor consistent with our modern views of financial justice. It is not the less true, however, that in the education of a family or nation, such a prohibition may be a necessary and useful discipline. We should look with scorn on boys who lent on interest to their brothers or their schoolfellows, and the ideal of the Law of Moses was that of treating all Israelites as brothers brought under the discipline of the schoolmaster. As if with a prescient insight into the besetting temptation of the race, the lawgiver forbade a practice which would have destroyed, and eventually did destroy, the sense of brotherhood (Neh. v. 1—13), leaving it open to receive interest from strangers who were outside the limits of the family (Deut. xxiii. 20). The higher law of Christ treats all men as brothers, and bids us, if it is right to lend as an act of charity, to do so for love, and not for profit. Cases where the business of the world calls for loans not for the relief of want, but as a matter of commercial convenience, lie obviously outside the range of the precept.

(43) **Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.**—In form the latter clause was a Rabbinic addition to the former; and this is important as showing that our Lord deals throughout not with the Law as such, but with the scribes' exposition of it. But it can hardly be said these words, as far as national enemies were concerned, were foreign to the spirit of the Law. The Israelites were practically commanded to hate the Canaanites and Amalekites, whom they were commissioned to destroy. The fault of the scribes was that they stereotyped the Law, which was in its nature transitory, and extended it in a wrong direction by making it the plea for indulgence in private enmities. Our Lord cancels the Rabbinic gloss as regards national and, *à fortiori*, private hatreds, and teaches us to strive after the ideal excellence which He realised, and to love, *i.e.*, to seek the good of those who have shown us the most bitter hostility. So He taught men to find a neighbour even in a Samaritan, and so He prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

(44) **Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you.**—The latter words are omitted in so many of the most ancient MSS. that most recent editors hold that they were inserted in the fourth or fifth century, so as to bring the verse into verbal agreement with Luke vi. 28. Taking it as it stands here, we note (1) the extension of the command to love our neighbour (Lev. xix. 18), so that it includes even those whom natural impulse prompts us to hate; (2) the stress laid on prayer as the highest utterance of that love. In such cases, circumstances may preclude acts which would be rejected, and words that would be met with scorn, but the prayer that they too may be delivered from the evil which has been their curse is always in our power, and in so praying we are drawing near to the mind of God, and asking that our wills may be as His.

(45) **That ye may be.**—Literally, and with far

maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. (46) For if ye love them which love you,[a] what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? (47) And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others?* do not even the publicans so?

(48) Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

CHAPTER VI.—(1) Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of[1] your Father which is in heaven. (2) Therefore when thou doest *thine*

[a] Luke 6. 32.
A.D. 31.

[1] Or, *with.*

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fuller meaning, *that ye may become.* We cannot become like God in power or wisdom. The attempt at that likeness to the Godhead was the cause of man's fall, and leads evermore to a like issue; but we cannot err in striving to be like Him in His love. (Comp. St. Paul's "followers [or, more literally, "*imitators*"] of God" in Eph. v. 1.) And the love which we are to reproduce is not primarily that of which the children of the kingdom are the direct objects, showing itself in pardon, and adoption, and spiritual blessings, but the beneficence which is seen in Nature. Our Lord assumes that sunshine, and rain, and fruitful seasons are His Father's gifts, and proofs (whatever may be urged to the contrary) of His loving purpose. Here, again, the teaching of the higher Stoics presents an almost verbal parallel: "If thou wouldst imitate the gods, do good even to the unthankful, for the sun rises even on the wicked, and the seas are open to pirates" (Seneca, *De Benefic.* iv. 2, 6).

(46) **The publicans.**—An account of the "publicans" of our Lord's time will find a more fitting place in the Notes on Matt. ix. 9. Here, it may be remarked that our Lord puts Himself, as it were, on the level of those to whom He speaks. They despised the publicans as below them, almost as a Pariah caste, and He speaks, as if He were using their own familiar language, yet with a widely different application. Were they after all above the publicans, if they confined their love to a reciprocity of good offices?

(47) **If ye salute your brethren.**—The prominence of salutation in the social life of the East gives a special vividness to this precept. To utter the formal "Peace be with you," to follow that up by manifold compliments and wishes, was to recognise those whom men saluted as friends and brothers. But this the very heathen did (*heathen* rather than "publicans" being here the true reading): were the followers of Christ to be content with copying heathen customs?

(48) **Be ye therefore perfect.**—Literally, *Ye therefore shall be perfect*—the ideal future that implies an imperative.

**Your Father which is in heaven.**—The better reading gives, *your heavenly Father.* The idea of perfection implied in the word here is that of the attainment of the end or ideal completeness of our being. In us that attainment implies growth, and the word is used (*e.g.*, in 1 Cor. ii. 6; Heb. v. 14) of men of full age as contrasted with infants. In God the perfection is not something attained, but exists eternally, but we draw near to it and become partakers of the divine nature when we love as He loves:

> ——"Earthly power doth then show likest God's
> When mercy seasons justice."

## VI.

(1) From the protest against the casuistry which tampered with and distorted the great primary commandments, the Sermon on the Mount passes to the defects of character and action which vitiated the religion of Pharisaism even where it was at its best. Its excellence had been that it laid stress, as the religion of Islam did afterwards, on the three great duties of the religious life, almsgiving, fasting, and prayer, rather than on sacrifices and offerings. Verbally, Pharisaism accepted on this point the widest and most spiritual teaching of the prophets, and so its home was in the Synagogue rather than the Temple, and it gained a hold on the minds of the people which the priests never gained. But a subtle evil found its way even here. Love of praise and power, rather than spontaneous love, and self-denial, and adoration, was the mainspring of their action, and so that which is the essence of all religion was absent even from the acts in which the purest and highest form of religion naturally shows itself.

**Your alms.**—The better MSS. give *righteousness,* and obviously with a far truer meaning, as the wider word which branches off afterwards into the three heads of alms, fasting, prayer. In Rabbinic language the whole was often used for the part, and "righteousness" was identified with "mercifulness," and that with giving money. The Greek version of the LXX. often renders the Hebrew word for *righteousness* by "alms." In the New Testament, however, there is no such narrowing of its meaning, and here the full significance of the word is fixed by its use in Matt. v. 20. The reading "alms" probably arose from a misconception of the real meaning of the passage, and the consequent assumption that it simply introduced the rule given in verses 2, 3.

**To be seen of them.**—It is the motive, and not the fact of publicity, that vitiates the action. The high ideal of the disciple of Christ is to let his light shine "before men" (the self-same words are used in Matt. v. 16 as here), and yet to be indifferent to their praise or even their opinion. In most religious men there is probably a mingling of the two motives, and we dare not say at what precise stage the presence of the lower overpowers the higher. It is enough to remember that it is the little speck which may taint the whole character till it loses all its life.

**Of your Father which is in heaven.**—More accurately, *with your Father,* as meaning, "in His estimate." The act is not done to and for Him, and therefore (speaking after the manner of men) He looks on it as having no claim to payment.

(2) **Alms.**—The history of the word is singularly interesting. In the original meaning of the Greek it was the quality of mercy, or rather of "mercifulness," as something more complete. The practice of the Hellenistic Jews limited the word (*eleemosyna*) to money-gifts. It passed with this meaning untranslated into the language of Latin Christendom, and from that again into European languages, in various forms, "aumone," "almose," and at last the word of six syllables and rich fulness of meaning contracts and collapses into our modern English "alms."

**Do not sound a trumpet before thee.**—Two conjectural interpretations have been given of the alms,[a] do not sound a trumpet[1] before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. (3) But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: (4) that thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

(5) And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are*: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. (6) But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in

[a] Rom. 12. 8.

[1] Or, *cause not a trumpet to be sounded.*

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words:—It has been supposed (1) that the wealthy Pharisees had a trumpet literally blown before them, to give notice to the poor of the neighbourhood that they were distributing their alms; (2) that the words refer to the clang of the money as it fell into the metal trumpet-shaped alms-boxes which were found in the synagogue, a clang which came as sweet music to the ears of the purse-proud giver. But as regards (1), the best scholars have found no trace of any such practice in Jewish literature, and it is hardly credible that such a thing could have been done in the synagogues; and (2) seems hardly adequate to the active meaning of the verb. There is no reason, however, for taking the words so literally. The figure of speech which describes a vain man as being "his own trumpeter," or making a "flourish of trumpets" about his own acts, has been, or might be, common in every country where trumpets have been used. What is meant is that, whether in the "offertories" of the synagogue or the alms given to beggars in the streets, there was a parade of benevolence which practically summoned men to gaze and admire.

**As the hypocrites do.**—Here again the word has a history of its own. Derived from a Greek verb which signifies answering, taking part in a dialogue, acting a part in a play, the noun in classical Greek was used simply for an actor, a man who plays a part. In one passage only in the LXX. version of the Old Testament (Job xxxvi. 13) it appears in the figurative sense of one who feigns a virtue which he has not. It thus lay ready for the wider use which the Evangelists have given it (it is not used by any writer of the New Testament except St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke), and passed with this new meaning, hardly altered in form, first into Latin and then into most of the languages of modern Europe.

**The streets.**—More strictly, the *lanes* or *alleys* of a city, as distinguished from the wider streets, properly so called, of verse 5, xii. 19, and elsewhere.

**They have their reward.**—The Greek is more expressive: *They have to the full, and so exhaust.* There is nothing more for them to look for. They bargained for that praise of men, and they get it; but they sought not the honour that cometh of God only, and therefore He gives them none.

(3) **Let not thy left hand know.**—The phrase was probably proverbial, and indicates, in the form of free hyperbole, extremest secrecy. It is possible that there may be some reference to the practice of using the right hand in offering gifts at the altar. The symbolical application, though an afterthought, is yet suggestive. The "right hand" is the higher spiritual element in us that leads to acts of true charity, the "left" is the baser, self-seeking nature. We ought, as it were, to set a barrier between the two, as far as possible, *i.e.*, to exclude that mingling of motives, which is at least the beginning of evil.

(4) **That thine alms may be in secret.**—Here again we have a principle rather than a rule. Publicity may be a duty, especially in public work. But this—gifts for schools, hospitals, and the like—is hardly contemplated in the word "alms," which refers rather to acts of mercy, to cases of individual suffering. Ostentation in those acts is what our Lord especially condemns.

**Thy Father which seeth in secret.**—The attribute which we call the Omniscience of God is commonly dwelt on as calculated to inspire a just fear of the All-seeing One. He sees, we say, the evil deeds that are done in secret. Here it is brought before us as an encouragement and ground of hope. Do we feel isolated, not understood, not appreciated? He sees in secret and will reward.

**Shall reward thee openly.**—A curious instance of an early attempt to improve on our Lord's teaching. The adverb "openly" is not found in the best MSS., and is now omitted by most editors. It would seem either as if a false rhetorical taste desired a more complete antithesis, or that the craving for public acknowledgment in the presence of men and angels asserted itself even here, and led men to add to the words of the divine Teacher. It need hardly be said that the addition weakens and lowers the force of the truth asserted. It is not necessarily in this way, "openly," that God rewards His servants, nor do the words point only to the reward of the last great day. The reward is at once immediate, and, it may be, secret—the hidden manna, the joy with which a stranger doth not intermeddle, and which no man taketh from us.

(5) **Standing in the synagogues.**—The Jewish custom, more or less prevalent throughout the East, and for a time retained at certain seasons in the Christian Church, was to pray standing, with outstretched, uplifted hands, and there was nothing in the attitude as such that made it an act of ostentatious devotion; nor would there have been any ostentation in thus joining in the common prayer of the congregation assembled in the synagogue. What our Lord's words point to, was the custom of going into the synagogue, as men go now into the churches of Latin Christendom, to offer private devotion (as, *e.g.*, in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican), and of doing this so as to attract notice, the worshipper standing apart as if absorbed in prayer, while secretly glancing round to watch the impression which he might be making on others who were looking on.

**In the corners of the streets.**—Not the same word as in verse 3, but the broad, open places of the city. There, too, the Pharisees might be seen, reciting their appointed prayers—probably the well-known eighteen acts of devotion which were appointed for the use of devout Israelites—and with the *tallith* or veil of prayer over their head.

(6) **Enter into thy closet.**—Literally, *the store-closet of thy house.* The principle, as before, is embodied in a rule which startles, and which cannot

secret shall reward thee openly. (7) But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions,[a] as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. (8) Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. (9) After this manner there-

[a] Ecclus. 7. 14.

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be binding literally. Not in synagogue or street, nor by the river-side (Acts xvi. 13); not under the fig-tree in the court-yard (John i. 50), nor on the housetop where men were wont to pray (Acts x. 9)—these might, each and all, present the temptations of publicity—but in the steward's closet, in the place which seemed to men least likely, which they would count it irreverent to connect with the idea of prayer. The principle thus clothed in paradox is, of course, that personal prayer should be strictly personal and private. Our Lord's mode of acting on the principle was, it will be remembered, to withdraw from crowds and cities, and to pass the night in prayer on the lonely slopes of the hills of Galilee (Matt. xiv. 23; Mark vi. 46; John vi. 15).

**Openly.**—Probably, as before, in verse 4, an interpolation.

(7) **Use not vain repetitions.**—The Greek word has a force but feebly rendered in the English. Formed from a word which reproduces the repeated attempts of the stammerer to clothe his thoughts in words, it might be almost rendered, "Do not stutter out your prayers, do not babble them over." The words describe only too faithfully the act of prayer when it becomes mechanical. The devotion of the rosary, in which every bead is connected with a Pater Noster or an Ave Maria, does but reproduce the eighteen prayers of the Rabbis, which they held it to be an act of religion to repeat. On the other hand, it is clear that the law of Christ does not exclude the iteration of intense emotion. That is not a "vain repetition;" and in the great crisis of His human life our Lord Himself prayed thrice "using the same words" (Matt. xxvi. 44). How far our use of the Lord's Prayer, or of the Kyrie Eleison of our Litanies, is open to the charge of "vain repetition" is another question. It is obvious that it may easily become so to any mechanical worshipper of the Pharisaic type; but there is, on the other side, an ever-accumulating weight of evidence from really devout souls, that they have found it helpful in sustaining the emotion without which prayer is dead.

**As the heathen do.**—We know too little of the details of the ritual of classical heathenism to be able to say how far the charge of vain repetition applied at this time to them. The cries of the worshippers of Baal "from morning even until noon" (1 Kings xviii. 26), the shouts of those of Artemis at Ephesus "for the space of two hours" (Acts xix. 34), may be taken as representative instances.

**Their much speaking.**—This thought was the root-evil of the worship of the heathen or the Pharisee. It gave to prayer a quantitative mechanical force, increased in proportion to the number of prayers offered. If fifty failed, a hundred might succeed. But this assumed that the object of prayer was to change the will of God, or to inform Him of what He did not know before, and our Lord teaches us—as, indeed, all masters of the higher life have taught—that that assumption vitiates prayer at once.

(8) **Your Father knoweth.**—This truth is rightly made the ground of prayer in one of the noblest collects of the Prayer Book of the English Church—"Almighty God, the Fountain of all wisdom, who knowest our necessities before we ask, and our ignorance in asking." Comp. St. Paul's "We know not what we should pray for as we ought" (Rom. viii. 26). But why then, it may be asked, pray at all? Why "make our requests known unto God" (Phil. iv. 6)? Logically, it may be, the question never has been, and never can be, answered. As in the parallel question of foreknowledge and free will, we are brought into a region in which convictions that seem, each of them, axiomatic, appear to contradict each other. All that can be done is to suggest partial solutions of the problem. We bring our wants and desires to God (1) that we may see them as He sees them, judge how far they are selfish or capricious, how far they are in harmony with His will; (2) that we may, in the thought of that Presence and its infinite holiness, feel that all other prayers—those which are but the expression of wishes for earthly good, or deliverance from earthly evil—are of infinitely little moment as compared with deliverance from the penalty and the power of the sin which we have made our own; (3) that, conscious of our weakness, we may gain strength for the work and the conflict of life in communion with the Eternal, who is in very deed a "Power that makes for righteousness." These are, if we may so speak, the lines upon which the Lord's Prayer has been constructed, and all other prayers are excellent in proportion as they approach that pattern. Partial deviations from it, as in prayers for fine weather, for plenty, and for victory, are yet legitimate (though they drift in a wrong direction), as the natural utterance of natural wants, which, if repressed, would find expression in superstition or despair. It is better that even these petitions, though not the highest form of prayer, should be purified by their association with the highest, than that they should remain unuttered as passionate cravings or, it may be, murmuring regrets.

(9) **After this manner.**—Literally, *thus.* The word sanctions at once the use of the words themselves, and of other prayers—prescribed, or unpremeditated—after the same pattern and in the same spirit. In Luke xi. 2 we have the more definite, "When ye pray, say, . . . ."

**Our Father.**—It is clear that the very word "Abba" (*father*) uttered by our Lord here, as in Mark xiv. 36, so impressed itself on the minds of men that, like "Amen" and "Hallelujah" and "Hosanna," it was used in the prayers even of converts from heathenism and Hellenistic Judaism. From its special association with the work of the Spirit in Rom. viii. 15, Gal. iv. 6, it would seem to have belonged to the class of utterances commonly described as the "tongues," in which apparently words from two or more languages were mingled together according as each best expressed the devout enthusiasm of the worshipper.

The thought of the Fatherhood of God was not altogether new. He had claimed "Israel as His son, even His firstborn" (Ex. iv. 22), had loved him as His child (Jer. xxxi. 9; Hos. xi. 1). The thought of an outraged Fatherhood underlies the reproaches of Isaiah (i. 2) and Malachi (i. 6). "Thou, O Lord, art our Father" (Isa. lxiv. 8) was the refuge of Israel from despair. It had become common in Jewish liturgies and forms of private prayer. As the disciples heard it, it would not at first convey to their minds thoughts beyond those fore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven,[a] Hallowed be thy name. (10) Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven.

[a] Luke 11. 2.

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with which they were thus familiar. But it was a word pregnant with a future. Time and the teaching of the Spirit were to develop what was now in germ. That it had its ground in the union with the Eternal Son, which makes us also sons of God; that it was a name that might be used, not by Israelites only, but by every child of man; that of all the names of God that express His being and character, it was the fullest and the truest—this was to be learnt as men were guided into all the truth. Like all such names, it had its inner and its outer circles of application. It was true of all men, true of all members of the Church of Christ, true of those who were led by the Spirit, in different degrees; but all true theology rests on the assumption that the ever-widening circles have the same centre, and that that centre is the Love of the Father.

The words "Our Father" are not a form excluding the use of the more personal "My Father" in solitary prayer, but they are a perpetual witness that even then we should remember that our right to use that name is no peculiar privilege of ours, but is shared by every member of the great family of God.

**Which art in heaven.**—The phrase, familiar as it is, has a history of special interest. (1.) In the earlier books of the Old Testament the words "Jehovah is God in heaven above and in earth beneath" (Deut. iv. 39; Josh. ii. 11), express His universal presence; and this was embodied also in the name of "the Most High God, the Possessor of heaven and earth," of the earliest patriarchal faith (Gen. xiv. 22). Later on, men began to be more conscious of the infinite distance between themselves and God, and represented the contrast by the thought that He was in heaven and they on earth (Eccles. v. 2); and this thought became a liturgical formula in the great dedication prayer of Solomon, "Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place"(1 Kings viii. 32, 34, *et cet.*; 2 Chron. vi. 21, *et cet.*). And so, emancipated from over-close identification with the visible firmament, the phrase became current as symbolising the world visible and invisible, which is alike the dwelling-place of God, uttering in the language of poetry that which we vainly attempt to express in the language of metaphysics by such terms as the Infinite, the Absolute, the Unconditioned. (2.) We ought not to forget that the words supply at once (as in the phrase, "God of heaven," in Ezra i. 2; Dan. ii. 18, 19) a link and a contrast between the heathen and the Jew, the Aryan and Semitic races. Each alike found in the visible heaven the symbol of the invisible forces of the universe of an unseen world; but the one first identified his heaven (the Varuna of the Vedic hymns, the Ouranos of the Greeks) with that world, and then personified each several force in it, the Pantheism of the thinker becoming the Polytheism of the worshipper; whilst to the other heaven was never more than the dwelling-place of God in His undivided unity.

**Hallowed be thy name.**—The first expression of thought in the pattern prayer is not the utterance of *our* wants and wishes, but that the Name of God—that which sums up all our thoughts of God—should be "hallowed," be to us and all men as a consecrated name, not lightly used in trivial speech, or rash assertion, or bitterness of debate, but the object of awe and love and adoration. The words "Jehovah, hallowed be His name," were familiar enough to all Israelites, and are found in many of their prayers, but here the position of the petition gives a new meaning to it, and makes it the key to all that follows. Still more striking is the fact, that this supplies a link between the teaching of the first three Gospels and that of the fourth. Thus the Lord Jesus taught His disciples to pray—thus, in John xii. 28, He prayed Himself, "Father, glorify Thy name."

(10) **Thy kingdom come.**—Historically, the prayer had its origin in the Messianic expectations embodied in the picture of the ideal king in Isa. xi. 1—6, xlii. 1—7, Dan. vii. 14. It had long been familiar to all who looked for the consolation of Israel. Now the kingdom of God, that in which He manifests His sovereignty more than in the material world or in the common course of history, had been proclaimed as nigh at hand. The Teacher of the prayer knew Himself to be the Head of that kingdom. But it was not, like the kingdoms of the world, one that rested on the despotism of might, but on the acknowledgment of righteousness. It was therefore ever growing to a completeness, which it has never yet reached. Its advance to that completeness might be retarded by man's self-will, and hastened by man's fulfilment of its conditions. And therefore we pray that it may "come" in its fulness, that all created beings may bring their wills into harmony with God's will. So far as that prayer comes from the heart and not from the lips only, it is in part self-fulfilling, in part it works according to the law by which God answers prayers that are in harmony with His own will; and in so far as the kingdom, though in one sense it has come, and is in the midst of us, and within us, is yet far from the goal towards which it moves, ever coming and yet to come, the prayer is one that never becomes obsolete, and may be the utterance of the saints in glory no less than of toilers and sufferers upon earth.

**Thy will be done.**—The prayer has often been, even in the lips of Christians, hardly more than the "acceptance of the inevitable." Like the Stoic, we have submitted to a destiny; like the Moslem, we have been resigned to a decree. But as it came from the lips of the Son of Man, it was surely far more than this. We pray that the will of God may be done because we believe it to be perfectly loving and righteous. It is the will that desires our sanctification (1 Thess. iv. 3), that does not will that any should perish. The real difficulty in the prayer is, that it lands us, as before, in a mystery which we cannot solve. It assumes that even the will of God is in part dependent on our wills, that it will not be done unless we so pray. The question, "Who hath resisted this will? Does it not ever fulfil itself?" forces itself on our thoughts. And the answer is found, as before, in accepting the seeming paradox of prayer. In one sense the will of God, which is also the eternal law, must fulfil itself; but it is one thing for that law to work in subduing all things to itself, another for it to bring all created wills into harmony with itself. And in really praying for this we, as before, in part fulfil the prayer.

**As it is in heaven.**—The thought is true of the order of the visible heaven, where law reigns supreme, with no "variableness or shadow of turning." But seeing that the obedience contemplated is that of the will, it is better, perhaps, to think of the words as pointing to the unseen hosts of heaven, the ministering angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. That all wills on earth should be brought into the same

(11) Give us this day our daily bread. (12) And forgive us our debts, as we

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entire conformity with the divine will as theirs, is what we are taught to pray for.

(11) **Give us this day our daily bread.**—A strange obscurity hangs over the words that are so familiar to us. The word translated "daily" is found nowhere else, with the one exception of the parallel passage in Luke xi. 3, and so far as we can judge must have been coined for the purpose, as the best equivalent for the unknown Aramaic word which our Lord actually used. We are accordingly thrown partly on its possible derivation, partly on what seems (compatibly with its derivation) most in harmony with the spirit of our Lord's teaching. The form of the word (see Note in *Excursus*) admits of the meanings, (1) bread sufficient for the day now coming; (2) sufficient for the morrow; (3) sufficient for existence; (4) over and above material substance—or, as the Vulgate renders it, *panis supersubstantialis.* Of these, (1) and (2) are the most commonly received; and the idea conveyed by them is expressed in the rendering "daily bread." So taken, it is a simple petition, like the prayer of Agur in Prov. xxx. 8, for "food convenient for us;" and as such, has been uttered by a thousand child-like hearts, and has borne its witness alike against over-anxiety and far-reaching desires for outward prosperity. It is not without some hesitation, in face of so general a concurrence of authority, that I find myself constrained to say that the last meaning seems to me the truest. Let us remember (1) the words with which our Lord had answered the Tempter, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. iv. 4); (2) His application of those words in "I have meat to eat that ye know not of" (John iv. 32); (3) His own use of bread as the symbol of that which sustains the spiritual life (John vi. 27—58); (4) the warnings in verses 25—31 not only against anxiety about what we shall eat and drink, but against *seeking* these things instead of seeking simply the kingdom of God and His righteousness—and we can scarcely fail, I think, to see that He meant His disciples, in this pattern Prayer, to seek for the nourishment of the higher and not the lower life. So taken, the petition, instead of being a contrast to the rest of the Prayer, is in perfect harmony with it, and the whole raises us to the region of thought in which we leave all that concerns our earthly life in the hands of our Father, without asking Him even for the supply of its simplest wants, seeking only that He would sustain and perfect the higher life of our spirit. So when we ask for "daily bread," we mean not common food, but the "Bread from heaven, which giveth life unto the world." So the reality of which the Eucharistic bread is the symbol is the Lord's gracious answer to the Prayer He has taught us.

(12) **Forgive us our debts.**—*Duty—i.e.,* that which we owe, or ought to do—and *debts* are, it may be noted, only different forms of the same word. A duty unfulfilled is a debt unpaid. Primarily, therefore, the words "our debts" represent sins of omission, and "trespasses" the transgression of a law, sins of commission. The distinction, however, though convenient, is more or less technical. Every transgression implies the non-fulfilment of duty in a more aggravated form, and the memory of both presents itself to the awakened conscience under the character of an ever-accumulating debt. Even the sins against our neighbour are, in this sense, debts which we have incurred to God; and as the past cannot be undone, they are debts which we can never pay. For us, therefore, the one helpful prayer is, "Forgive the debt," and the gospel which our Lord proclaimed was, that the Father was ready to forgive. The confession of the debt was enough to ensure its remission, and then there was to come the willing service of a grateful love instead of the vain attempt, which Pharisaism encouraged, to score up an account of good works, as part payment, and therefore as a set-off, reducing the amount of debt. The parables of the Two Debtors (Luke vii. 41) and of the Unforgiving Creditor whose own debt had been forgiven (Matt. xviii. 23—35) were but expansions of the thought which we find in its germ in this clause of the Lord's Prayer.

In striking contrast with that clause is the claim of merit which insinuates itself so readily into the hearts of those who worship without the consciousness that they need forgiveness, and which uttered itself in the daring prayer attributed to Apollonius of Tyana, "Give me that which is my due—pay me, ye gods, the debts ye owe to me."

**As we forgive our debtors.**—The better reading gives, *We have forgiven,* as a completed act before we begin to pray. In the very act of prayer we are taught to remind ourselves of the conditions of forgiveness. Even here, in the region of the free grace of God, there is a law of retribution. The temper that does not forgive cannot be forgiven, because it is *ipso facto* a proof that we do not realise the amount of the debt we owe. We forget the ten thousand talents as we exact the hundred pence, and in the act of exacting we bring back that burden of the greater debt upon ourselves.

Up to this point, in the petitions of the Lord's Prayer, we may think of the Man Christ Jesus as having not only taught the Prayer, but Himself used it. During the years of youth and manhood it may well have been thus far the embodiment of the outpourings of His soul in communion with His Father. Even the prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," whether we take it in its higher or its lower meaning, would be the fit utterance of His sense of dependence as the Son of Man. Can we think the same of the prayer, "Forgive us our debts?" It is, of course, opposed to the whole teaching of Scripture to believe that there dwelt on His human spirit the memory of a single transgression. In the fullest sense of the word He was without sin, the Just One, needing no repentance. And yet the analogy of those of His saints and servants who have followed most closely in the footsteps of His holiness may lead us to think it possible that even these words also may have had a meaning in which He could use them. In proportion as men attain holiness and cease to transgress, they gain a clearer perception of the infinite holiness of God, and seek to be made partakers of it. They would fain pray and praise and work for Him evermore, but though the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. They are weary and faint, and they become more intensely conscious of the limits of their human powers as contrasted with the limitless range of their desires. In this sense, therefore, and strictly in reference to the limitations of the true, yet absolutely sinless, humanity which He vouchsafed to assume, it is just conceivable that He too Himself may have used this prayer. And we must remember also that He prayed as the Brother of mankind, as the repreforgive our debtors. (13) And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. (14) For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:[a] (15) but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

(16) Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. (17) But

[a] Mark 11. 25.

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sentative of the race. The intensity of His sympathy with sinners, which was the condition of His atoning work (Heb. iv. 15), would make Him, though He knew no sin, to identify Himself with sinners. He would feel as if their transgressions were His transgressions, their debts His debts.

(13) **Lead us not into temptation.**—The Greek word includes the two thoughts which are represented in English by "trials," *i.e.*, sufferings which test or try, and "temptations," allurements on the side of pleasure which tend to lead us into evil. Of these the former is the dominant meaning in the language of the New Testament, and is that of which we must think here. (Comp. Matt. xxvi. 41.) We are taught not to think of the temptation in which lust meets opportunity as that into which God leads us (Jas. i. 13, 14); there is therefore something that shocks us in the thought of asking Him not to lead us into it. But trials of another kind, persecution, spiritual conflicts, agony of body or of spirit, these may come to us as a test or as a discipline. Should we shrink from these? An ideal stoicism, a perfected faith, would say, "No, let us accept them, and leave the issue in our Father's hands." But those who are conscious of their weakness cannot shake off the thought that they might fail in the conflict, and the cry of that conscious weakness is therefore, "Lead us not into such trials," even as our Lord prayed, "If it be possible, let this cup pass away from me" (Matt. xxvi. 39). And the answer to the prayer may come either directly in actual exemption from the trial, or in "the way to escape" (1 Cor. x. 13), or in strength to bear it. It is hardly possible to read the prayer without thinking of the recent experience of "temptation" through which our Lord had passed. The memory of that trial in all its terrible aspects was still present with Him, and in His tender love for His disciples He bade them pray that they might not be led into anything so awful.

**Deliver us from evil.**—The Greek may grammatically be either neuter or masculine, "evil" in the abstract, or the "evil one" as equivalent to the "devil." The whole weight of the usage of New Testament language is in favour of the latter meaning. In our Lord's own teaching we have the "evil one" in Matt. xiii. 19, 38; John xvii. 15 (probably); in St. Paul's (Eph. vi. 16; 2 Thess. iii. 3), in St. John's (1 John ii. 13, 14; iii. 12; v. 18, 19) this is obviously the only possible interpretation. Rom. xii. 9, and possibly John xvii. 15, are the only instances of the other. Added to this, there is the thought just adverted to, which leads us to connect our Lord's words with His own experience. The prayer against temptation would not have been complete without reference to the Tempter whose presence was felt in it. We may lawfully pray to be spared the trial. If it comes, there is yet room for the prayer, "Deliver us from the power of him who is our enemy and Thine."

**For thine is the kingdom, . . . .**—The whole clause is wanting in the best MSS. and in the earlier versions, and is left unnoticed by the early Fathers, who comment on the rest of the Prayer. Most recent editors have accordingly omitted it, as probably an addition made at first (after the pattern of most Jewish prayers) for the liturgical use of the Prayer, and then interpolated by transcribers to make the text of the discourse harmonise with the liturgies.

(14, 15) The condition implied in the Prayer itself is more distinctly asserted. It is, as we have seen, not an arbitrary condition, but the result of the eternal laws of the divine order. Repentance is the condition of being forgiven, and the temper that does not forgive is *ipso facto* incompatible with the temper of the penitent. As if for greater emphasis, the truth is presented in both its positive and negative aspects.

(16) **When ye fast.**—Fasting had risen under the teaching of the Pharisees into a new prominence. Under the Law there had been but the one great fast of the Day of Atonement, on which men were "to afflict their souls" (Lev. xxiii. 27; Num. xxix. 7), and practice had interpreted that phrase as meaning total abstinence from food. Other fasts were occasional, in times of distress or penitence, as in Joel i. 14, ii. 15; or as part of a policy affecting to be religious zeal (1 Kings xxi. 9, 12); or as the expression of personal sorrow (1 Sam. xx. 34; 2 Sam. xii. 16; Ezra x. 6; Neh. i. 4; *et al.*). These were observed with an ostentatious show of affliction which called forth the indignant sarcasm of the prophets (Isa. lviii. 5). The "sackcloth" took the place of the usual raiment, "ashes" on the head, of the usual unguents (Neh. ix. 1; Ps. xxxv. 13). The tradition of the Pharisees, starting from the true principle that fasting was one way of attaining self-control, and that as a discipline it was effectual in proportion as it was systematic, fixed on the fasts "twice in the week," specified in the prayer of the Pharisee (Luke xviii. 12); and the second and fifth days of the week were fixed, and connected with some vague idea that Moses went up Mount Sinai on the one, and descended on the other. Our Lord, we may note, does not blame the principle, or even the rule, on which the Pharisees acted. He recognises fasting, as He recognises almsgiving and prayer, and is content to warn His disciples against the ostentation that vitiates all three, the secret self-satisfaction under the mask of contrition, the "pride that apes humility." The very words, "when thou fastest" contain an implied command.

**Of a sad countenance.**—Strictly, *of sullen look*, the moroseness of affected austerity rather than of real sorrow.

**They disfigure their faces.**—The verb is the same as that translated "corrupt" in verse 19. Here it points to the unwashed face and the untrimmed hair, possibly to the ashes sprinkled on both, that men might know and admire the rigorous asceticism.

(17) **Anoint thine head, and wash thy face.**—Both these acts were rigidly prohibited by the traditions of the Elders on the Day of Atonement, and by implication on other fast days also. They were the outward signs of joy (Eccles. ix. 8), and were therefore

thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; (18) that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

(19) Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: (20) but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:[a] (21) for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (22) The light of the body is the eye:[b] if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. (23) But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great *is* that darkness!

(24) No man can serve two masters:[c] for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. (25) Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life,[d] what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than

[c] Luke 16. 13.

[a] Luke 12. 33; 1 Tim. 6. 19.

[d] Ps. 55. 22; Luke 12. 22; 1 Pet. 5. 7.

[b] Luke 11. 34.

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looked on as unsuitable for a time of mourning. The disciples of Christ were to hide their contrition and self-discipline, and even when the heart knew its own bitterness were to be blithe and cheerful, opening their griefs only to their Father in heaven.

**Openly.**—Here again the artificial antithesis is to be rejected as an interpolation.

(19) **Lay not up for yourselves treasures.**—Literally, with a force which the English lacks, *treasure not up your treasures.*

**Where moth and rust doth corrupt.**—The first word points to one form of Eastern wealth, the costly garments of rich material, often embroidered with gold and silver. (Comp. "Your garments are moth-eaten" in Jas. v. 2.) The second word is not so much the specific "rust" of metals, as the decay which eats into and corrodes all the perishable goods of earth.

(20) **Treasures in heaven.**—These, as in the parallel passage of Luke xii. 33, are the good works, or rather the character formed by them, which follow us into the unseen world (Rev. xiv. 13), and are subject to no process of decay. So men are "rich in good works" (1 Tim. vi. 18), "rich in faith" (Jas. ii. 5), are made partakers of the "unsearchable riches of Christ and His glory" (Eph. iii. 8, 16).

(21) **Where your treasure is.**—The words imply the truth, afterwards more definitely asserted, that it is impossible to "serve God and mammon" (verse 24). Men may try to persuade themselves that they will have a treasure on earth and a treasure in heaven also, but in the long-run, one or the other will assert its claim to be *the* treasure, and will claim the no longer divided allegiance of the heart.

(22) **The light of the body.**—Literally, *the lamp of the body.* So in Prov. xx. 27, "The spirit of man is the candle (or 'lamp') of the Lord"—that which, under the name of "conscience," the "moral sense," the "inner man" discerns spiritual realities, distinguishes right from wrong, gives the light by which we see our way. If this is "single," if it discerns clearly, all is well. The "whole body," the life of the man in all its complex variety, will be illumined by that light. The connection with what precedes lies on the surface. Singleness of intention will preserve us from the snare of having a double treasure, and therefore a divided heart.

(23) **If thine eye be evil.**—If the spiritual faculty, whose proper work it is to give light, be itself diseased—if it discerns not singly but doubly, and therefore dimly—then the whole life also is shrouded in gloom. If that is the case with the higher life, what will be the state of the lower! If the light is darkened, what will be the state of the region of life which is in itself naturally dark—the region of appetites and passions, which needs the presence of the light to keep them at all in check! "If the light that is in thee be darkness, the darkness *how great will it be!*"

(24) **No man can serve two masters.**—Literally, *can be the slave of two masters.* The clauses that follow describe two distinct results of the attempt to combine the two forms of service which are really incompatible. In most cases, there will be love for the one, and a real hatred for the other. The man who loves God cannot love the evil world, and, so far as it is evil, will learn to hate it. The man who loves the world will, even in the midst of lip-homage, hate the service of God in his inmost heart. But there are natures which seem hardly susceptible of such strong emotions as love or hatred. In that case there will be a like, though not an identical, issue. The man's will will drift in one direction or another. He will cleave to one with such affection as he is capable of, and will hold the other cheap. God or mammon, not both together, will be the ruling power with him.

**Mammon.**—The word means in Syriac "money" or "riches," and is used in this sense in Luke xvi. 9. It occurs frequently in the Chaldee Targum, but no word resembling it is found in the Hebrew of the Old Testament. In the fourth century Jerome found it in use in Syria, and Augustine in the Punic dialect of his native country. There is no ground for believing that it ever became the name of any deity, who, like the Plutus of the Greeks, was worshipped as the god of wealth. Here, there is obviously an approach to a personification for the sake of contrasting the service or worship of money with that which is due to God. Milton's description of Mammon among the fallen angels is a development of the same thought (*Par. Lost, I.* 678).

(25) **Take no thought.**—The Greek word sometimes thus translated, and sometimes by "care" or "be careful" (1 Cor. vii. 32, 33, 34; Phil. ii. 20; iv. 6), expresses anxiety, literally, the care which *distracts* us. And this was, in the sixteenth century, the meaning of the English phrase "take thought." Of this, we have one example in 1 Sam. ix. 5; other examples of it are found in Shakespeare, "*take thought,* and die for

raiment? (26) Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? (27) Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? (28) And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin: (29) and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. (30) Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, *shall he* not much more

Cæsar” (*Julius Cœsar*, ii. 1), or Bacon (*Henry the Eighth*, p. 220), who speaks of a man “dying with *thought* and anguish” before his case was heard. The usage of the time, therefore, probably led the translators of 1611 to choose the phrase, as stronger than the “be not careful” which in this passage stood in all previous versions. The changing fortune of words has now made it weaker, and it would be better to substitute “over-careful” or “over-anxious.” The temper against which our Lord warns His disciples is not that of foresight, which merely provides for the future, but the allowing ourselves to be harassed and vexed with its uncertainties. To “take thought” in the modern sense is often the most effectual safeguard (next to the higher defence of trust in God) against “taking thought” in the older.

**For your life.**—The Greek word is the same as that commonly rendered “soul,” and the passage is interesting as an example of its use in the wider sense which includes the lower as well as the higher life. (Comp. Matt. x. 39; xvi. 25; Mark iii. 4, *et al.*) We note in the form of the precept the homeliness of the cases selected as illustration. We hear the language of One who speaks to peasants with their simple yet pressing wants, not to the wider cares of the covetous or ambitious of a higher grade.

**Is not the life more than meat, . . . ?**—The reasoning is *à fortiori.* God has given you the greater, can you not trust Him to give you also the less? In some way or other there will come food to sustain life, and clothing for the body, and men should not so seek for more as to be troubled about them.

(26) **Behold the fowls of the air.**—Better, *birds.* As the words were spoken we may venture to think of them as accompanied by the gesture which directed attention to the turtle-doves, the wood-pigeons, and the finches, which are conspicuous features in a Galilean landscape. Our modern use of the word has restricted “fowls” to one class of birds; but in Chaucer, and indeed in the English of the sixteenth century, it was in common use in a wider sense, and we read of the “small fowles that maken melodie,” as including the lark, the linnet, and the thrush.

**Are ye not much better than they?**—Here again the reasoning is *à fortiori.* Assuming a personal will, the will of a Father, as that which governs the order of the universe, we may trust to its wisdom and love to order all things well for the highest as for the meanest of its creatures. For those who receive whatever comes in the spirit of contented thankfulness, *i.e.*, for those who “love God,” all things work together for good.

(27) **One cubit unto his stature.**—The Greek for the last word admits either this meaning (as in Luke xix. 3, and perhaps Luke ii. 52) or that of age (as in John ix. 21, 23, and Heb. xi. 24). Either gives an adequate sense to the passage. No anxiety will alter our bodily height, and the other conditions of our life are as fixed by God’s laws as that is, as little therefore dependent upon our volition; neither will that anxiety add to the length of life which God has appointed for us. Of the two meanings, however, the last best satisfies the teaching of the context. Men are not anxious about adding to their stature. They are often anxious about prolonging their life. Admit the thought that our days are but “as a span long” (Ps. xxxix. 5), and then the addition of a cubit becomes a natural metaphor. It is to be noted that in the parallel passage in St. Luke (xii. 26) this appears as “that which is least,” and which yet lies beyond our power.

(28) **Why take ye thought for raiment?**—The question might well be asked of every race of the whole family of man. Yet we ought not to forget its special pointedness as addressed to a people who reckoned their garments, not less than their money, as part of their capital, and often expended on them the labour of many weeks or months. (Comp. verse 20; Jas. v. 2.)

**Consider the lilies of the field.**—Here again we may think of the lesson as drawn immediately from the surrounding objects. The hill-sides of Galilee are clothed in spring with the crown imperial, and the golden amaryllis, and crimson tulips, and anemones of all shades from scarlet to white, to say nothing of the commoner buttercups and dandelions and daisies; and all these are probably classed roughly together under the generic name of “lilies.” And these, with what we may reverently speak of as a love of Nature, the Lord tells His disciples to “consider,” *i.e.*, not merely to look at with a passing glance, but to study—to learn, as it were, by heart—till they have realised every beauty of structure and form and hue.

(29) **I say unto you.**—The formula of emphasis is not without a special force here (comp. Matt. xviii. 10, 19). Man’s gaze was drawn to the “gorgeous apparel,” the gold-embroidered robes of kings and emperors. Jewish traditions as to the glory of Solomon represented even his attendants as clothed in purple, and with hair glittering with gold-dust. He, the true Son of David, saw in the simplest flower that grows a glory above them all. “The lily shames the king.”

(30) **The grass of the field.**—The term is used generically to include the meadow-flowers which were cut down with the grass, and used as fodder or as fuel. The scarcity of wood in Palestine made the latter use more common there than in Europe. The “oven” in this passage was the portable earthen vessel used by the poor for baking their bread. The coarse ligneous hay was placed below it and round it, and short-lived as the flame was, so that “the crackling of the thorns” (Ps. cxviii. 12; Eccles. vii. 6) became proverbial, it had time to do its work.

**O ye of little faith.**—The word is found only in our Lord’s teaching, and the passages in which it occurs are all singularly suggestive. The disciples were not faithless or unbelieving, but their trust was weak. They lacked in moments of anxiety the courage which leads men to rely implicitly on the love and wisdom of their Father. So in the stormy night on the lake, or when Peter began to sink in the waves, or when the disciples *clothe* you, O ye of little faith? (31) Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (32) (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. (33) But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (34) Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof.

A.D. 31.

CHAPTER VII.—(1) Judge not, that

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had forgotten to take bread, the same word recurs (Matt. viii. 26; xiv. 31; xvi. 8).

(31) **Therefore . . .**—The command which, in verses 25 and 28, had before been given as general and abstract, is now enforced as the conclusion of a process of thought more or less inductive. A change in the tense, which we fail to express in English, indicates more special and personal application—"Do not take thought, do not be over-anxious *now*."

(32) **After all these things do the Gentiles seek.**—The tone is one of pity rather than of censure, though it appeals, not without a touch of gentle rebuke (as before in verse 5) to the national pride of Israelites: "You look down upon the heathen *nations*, and think of yourselves as God's *people*, yet in what do you excel them, if you seek only what they are seeking?"

**For your heavenly Father knoweth . . .**—The bearing of this teaching on the meaning of the "daily bread" of the Lord's Prayer has already been noticed (comp. Note on verse 11). The outer life of man, and its accidents, may well be left to the wisdom of the All-knowing. It lies below the region of true prayer, or occupies an altogether subordinate place within it.

(33) **Seek ye first the kingdom of God.**—The context shows that the words point to the "seeking" of prayer, rather than of act, though the latter meaning is, of course, not excluded. What is thus to be sought is "the kingdom of God" (the change from the less personal "kingdom of heaven" is significant), the higher spiritual life in its completeness, for ourselves and for others; and with it we are to seek "His righteousness," that which, being perfect beyond the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, must be His gift to us, and therefore to be sought in prayer. One who seeks for this may well be content to leave all else in his Father's hands. Even without his asking "they shall be added unto him" in such measure as is best for him. Among the few traditional sayings ascribed to our Lord of which we can think as probably an authentic report of His teaching, is one to the same effect quoted by Origen and Clement of Alexandria, "Ask great things, and little things shall be added to you: ask heavenly things, and earthly things shall be added to you."

(34) **Take therefore no thought for the morrow.**—No precept of divine wisdom has found so many echoes in the wisdom of the world. Epicurean self-indulgence, Stoic apathy, practical common-sense, have all preached the same lesson, and bidden men to cease their questionings about the future. That which was new in our Lord's teaching was the ground on which the precept rested. It was not simply the *carpe diem*—"make the most of the present"—of the seeker after a maximum of enjoyment, nor the acceptance by man's will of an inevitable destiny, nor the vain struggle to rise above that inevitable fate. Men were to look forward to the future calmly, to avoid the temper

"Over-exquisite
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils,"

because they had a Father in heaven who cared for each one of them with a personal and individualising love.

**Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.**—The word rendered "evil" occurs in the Gospels only in this passage, and in the Epistles has commonly the sense of "wickedness." That meaning would be too strong here; but it reminds us that our Lord is speaking not of what we call the simple accidents or misfortunes of life, but of the troubling element which each day brings with it, and against which we have to contend, lest it should lead us into sin. That conflict is more than enough for the day, without anticipating a further mischief.

## VII.

(1) The plan and sequence of the discourse is, as has been said, less apparent in this last portion. Whether this be the result of omission or of insertion, thus much at least seems clear, that while chap. v. is mainly a protest against the teaching of the scribes, and chap. vi. mainly a protest against their corruption of the three great elements of the religious life—alms-giving, prayer, and fasting—and the worldliness out of which that corruption grew, this deals chiefly with the temptations incident to the more advanced stages of that life when lower forms of evil have been overcome—with the temper that judges others, the self-deceit of unconscious hypocrisy, the danger of unreality.

**Judge not, that ye be not judged.**—The words point to a tendency inherent in human nature, and are therefore universally applicable; but they had, we must remember, a special bearing on the Jews. They, as really in the van of the religious progress of mankind, took on themselves to judge other nations. All true teachers of Israel, even though they represented different aspects of the truth, felt the danger, and warned their countrymen against it. St. Paul (Rom. ii. 3; 1 Cor. iv. 5) and St. James (iv. 11) alike, in this matter, echo the teaching of their Master. And the temptation still continues. In proportion as any nation, any church, any society, any individual man rises above the common forms of evil that surround them, they are disposed to sit in judgment on those who are still in the evil.

The question, how far we can obey the precept, is not without its difficulties. Must we not, even as a matter of duty, be judging others every day of our lives? The juryman giving his verdict, the master who discharges a dishonest servant, the bishop who puts in force the discipline of the Church—are these acting against our Lord's commands? And if not, where are we to draw the line? The answer to these questions is not found in the distinctions of a formal casuistry. We have rather to remember that our Lord here, as elsewhere, gives principles rather than rules, and embodies the principle in a rule which, because it cannot be kept in the letter, forces us back upon the spirit. What is forbidden is the censorious judging ye be not judged.[a] (2) For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.[b] (3) And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye,[c] but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? (4) Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam *is* in thine own eye? (5) Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

(6) Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

(7) Ask, and it shall be given you;[d]

[a] Luke 6. 37; Rom. 2. 1.

[b] Mark 4. 24; Luke 6. 38.

[c] Luke 6. 41.

[d] ch. 21. 22; Mark 11. 24; Luke 11. 9; John 16. 24; Jas. 1. 5, 6.

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temper, eager to find faults and condemn men for them, suspicious of motives, detecting, let us say, for example, in controversy, and denouncing, the faintest shade of heresy. No mere rules can guide us as to the limits of our judgments. What we need is to have "our senses exercised to discern between good and evil," to cultivate the sensitiveness of conscience and the clearness of self-knowledge. Briefly, we may say:—(1.) Judge no man unless it be a duty to do so. (2.) As far as may be, judge the offence, and not the offender. (3.) Confine your judgment to the earthly side of faults, and leave their relation to God, to Him who sees the heart. (4.) Never judge at all without remembering your own sinfulness, and the ignorance and infirmities which may extenuate the sinfulness of others.

(2) **With what judgment ye judge, . . . .**—Here again truth takes the form of a seeming paradox. The unjust judgment of man does not bring upon us a divine judgment which is also unjust; but the severity which we have unjustly meted out to others, becomes, by a retributive law, the measure of that which is justly dealt out to us.

(3) **Why beholdest thou the mote . . . ?**—The Greek noun so translated means a "stalk" or "twig" rather than one of the fine particles of dust floating in the sun to which we attach the word "mote." The illustration seems to have been a familiar one among the Jews, and a proverb all but verbally identical is found as a saying of Rabbi Tarphon. Like illustrations have been found in the proverbs and satires of every country, all teaching that men are keen-sighted as to the faults of others, blind as to their own. The Gracchi complain of sedition, and Clodius accuses others of adultery. We all need the wish—

> "Oh, wad some Power the giftie gie us,
> To see oursels as others see us!"

**But considerest.**—There is the same contrast as between "seeing" and "considering" in Matt. vi. 26, 28. Our own faults require the careful scrutiny which we never give them: the faults of others we should be content to glance at.

(4) **How wilt thou say**—*i.e.*, how wilt thou have the face to say.

(5) **Thou hypocrite.**—The man deserves this name, because he acts the part of a teacher and reformer, when he himself needs repentance and reform the most. The hypocrisy is all the greater because it does not know itself to be hypocritical.

**Then shalt thou see clearly.**—Here the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount rises far above the level of the maxims which, to a certain extent, it resembles. It gives a new motive to the work of self-scrutiny and self-reformation. While we are blind with self-deceit we are but bunglers in the work of dealing with the faults of others. When we have wrestled with and overcome our own besetting sins, then, and not till then, shall we be able, with the insight and tact which the work demands, to help others to overcome theirs.

(6) **That which is holy.**—The words point to the flesh which has been offered for sacrifice, the "holy thing" of Lev. xxii. 6, 7, 10, 16, of which no unclean person or stranger, and *à fortiori* no unclean beast, was to eat. To give that holy flesh to dogs would have seemed to the devout Israelite the greatest of all profanations. Our Lord teaches us that there is a like risk of desecration in dealing with the yet holier treasure of divine truth. Another aspect of the same warning is brought out in the second clause. The fashion of the time had made pearls the costliest of all jewels, as in the parable of Matt. xiii. 45 (comp. also 1 Tim. ii. 9), and so they too became symbols of the preciousness of truth. The "dogs" and the "swine," in their turn, represent distinct forms of evil, the former being here, as in Phil. iii. 2, Rev. xxii. 15, the type of impurity, the latter (as in Ps. lxxx. 13) of ferocity. The second comparison may possibly imply, as in a condensed fable, the disappointment and consequent rage of the swine at finding that what they took for grain was only pearls. We are to beware lest we so present the truth, either in direct teaching or by an undiscerning disclosure of the deeper religious emotions of the soul, to men, that we make them worse and not better than before.

We are met by the questions, Are we, then, to class our fellow-men under these heads, and to think of them as dogs and swine? Is not this to forget the previous teaching, and to judge with the harshest judgment? The answer to these questions must be found, we may believe, in thinking of the dogs and swine as representing not men and women as such, but the passions of this kind or that which make them brutish. So long as they identify themselves with those passions, we must deal cautiously and wisely with them. St. Paul did not preach the gospel to the howling mob at Ephesus, or to the "lewd fellows of the baser sort" at Thessalonica, and yet at another time he would have told any member of those crowds that he too had been redeemed, and might claim an inheritance among those who had been sanctified. We need, it might be added, to be on our guard against the brute element in ourselves not less than in others. There, too, we may desecrate the holiest truths by dealing with them in the spirit of irreverence, or passion, or may cynically jest with our own truest and noblest impulses.

(7) **Ask, and it shall be given.**—The transition is again abrupt, and suggests the idea that some links are missing. The latent sequence of thought would seem to be this, "If the work of reforming others and ourselves," men might say, "is so difficult, how shall we dare to enter on it? Where shall we find the courage and the wisdom which we need?" And the answer is, In prayer for those gifts.

seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: (8) for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. (9) Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? (10) Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? (11) If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? (12) Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you,[a] do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

(13) Enter ye in at the strait gate:[b] for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and

[a] Luke 6. 31.

[b] Luke 13. 24.

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Here, once more, the words are absolute and unqualified, and yet are clearly limited by implied conditions. It is assumed (1) that we ask for good gifts—for "bread" and not for a "stone," for a "fish" and not for a "serpent;" and (2) that we ask, as Christ has taught us, in His name and according to His spirit. Otherwise we may ask and receive not, because we ask amiss.

The three words imply distinct degrees of intensity. There is the "asking" in the spoken words of prayer, the "seeking" in the efforts and labours which are acted prayers, the "knocking" at the gate with the urgent importunity which claims admission into our Father's house.

(9) **Or what man is there of you.**—The meaning of the illustrations is obvious enough, yet their homeliness is noticeable as addressed to the peasants of Galilee, who found in fish and bread, as in the miracles of the Five thousand and the Four thousand, the staple of their daily food.

(11) **If ye then, being evil.**—Tne words at once recognise the fact of man's depravity, and assert that it is not total. In the midst of all our evil there is still that element of natural and pure affection which makes the fatherhood of men a fit parable of the Fatherhood of God. We mount from our love to His, abstracting from our thoughts the evil of which we cannot but be conscious.

**Give good things to them that ask him.**—The context shows that the "good things" are spiritual and not temporal gifts, the wisdom and insight which we all need, or rather (as in the parallel passage of Luke xi. 13) the one gift of the Holy Spirit, which, in its sevenfold diversity, includes them all.

(12) **Therefore . . . whatsoever.**—The sequence of thought requires, perhaps, some explanation. God gives His good things in answer to our wishes, if only what we wish for is really for our good. It is man's highest blessedness to be like God, to "be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect," and therefore in this respect too he must strive to resemble Him. The ground thus taken gives a new character to that which otherwise had already become almost one of the "common-places" of Jewish and heathen ethics. Perhaps the most interesting illustration of the former is the well-known story of the Gentile inquirer who went to Shammai, the great scribe, and asked to be taught the law, in a few brief words, while he stood on one foot. The Rabbi turned away in anger. The questioner then went to Hillel, and made the same demand; and the sage turned and said, "Whatsoever thou wouldest that men should not do to thee, that do not thou to them. All our law is summed up in that." And so the Gentile became a proselyte. A like negative rule is quoted by Gibbon (*Decl. and Fall*, c. liv., note 2) from Isocrates, not without a sneer, as if it anticipated the teaching of the Christ. The nearest approach to our Lord's rule is, however, found in the saying ascribed to Aristotle, who, when asked how we should act towards our friends, replied, "As we would they should act to us" (Diog. Laert., v. 1, § 21). All these, however, though we may welcome them as instances of the *testimonium animæ naturaliter Christianæ* (as Tertullian calls it), are yet wanting in the completeness of our Lord's precept, and still more do they fall below it in regard of the ground on which the precept rests, and the power given to perform it. Yet even here, too, there is, of necessity, an implied limitation. We cannot comply with all men's desires, nor ought we to wish that they should comply with ours, for those desires may be foolish and frivolous, or may involve the indulgence of lust or passion. The rule is only safe when our own will has been first purified, so that we wish only from others that which is really good. Reciprocity in evil or in folly is obviously altogether alien from the mind of Christ.

(13) **Enter ye in at the strait gate.**—The figure was possibly suggested by some town actually in sight. Safed, the "city set on a hill," or some other, with the narrow pathway leading to the yet narrower gate, the "needle's eye" of the city, through which the traveller entered. Such, at any rate, was the picture which the words presented. A like image had been used before, with a singular coincidence of language, in the allegory known as the *Tablet* of Cebes, the Disciple of Socrates: "Seest thou not a certain small door, and a pathway before the door, in no way crowded, but few, very few, go in thereat? This is the way that leadeth to true discipline" (c. 16). The meaning of the parable here lies on the surface. The way and the gate are alike the way of obedience and holiness, and the gate is to be reached not without pain and effort; but only through it can we enter into the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem. A deeper significance is, however, suggested even by our Lord's own teaching. He Himself is the "way" (John xiv. 6), or with a slight variation of the imagery, He is the "door," or gate, by which His sheep enter into the fold (John x. 7). Only we must remember that His being thus the "way" and the "gate" does not mean that we can find, in union with Him, a substitute for holiness, but indicates simply how we are to attain to it.

**That leadeth to destruction.**—The question, which has been much discussed lately, whether this word "destruction" means the extinction of conscious life—what is popularly called annihilation—or prolonged existence in endless suffering, is one which can hardly be settled by mere reference to lexicons. So far as they go, the word implies, not annihilation, but waste (Matt. xxvi. 8; Mark xiv. 4), perdition, *i.e.*, the loss of all that makes existence precious. I question whether a single passage can be adduced in which it means, in relation to material things, more than the breaking up many there be which go in thereat: (14) Because[1] strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

(15) Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. (16) Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?[a] (17) Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. (18) A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. (19) Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.[b] (20) Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

(21) Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom

[1] Or, *How.*

[b] ch. 3. 10.

[a] Luke 6. 43.

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of their outward form and beauty, or in spiritual things, more than what may be described as the wretchedness of a wasted life. The use of the cognate verb confirms this meaning. Men "perish" when they are put to death (Matt. xxii. 7; Acts v. 37; *et al.*). Caiaphas gave his counsel that one man should die for the people, that the whole nation *perish* not (John xi. 50). The demons ask whether the Christ has come to *destroy* them (Mark i. 24). The sheep are *lost* when they are wandering in the wilderness (Matt. xv. 24; Luke xv. 6). The immediate context leads to the same conclusion. "Life" is more than mere existence. "Destruction," by parity of reasoning, should be more than mere non-existence. On the other hand, the fact of the waste, the loss, the perdition, does not absolutely exclude the possibility of deliverance. The *lost* sheep was found; the exiled son, *perishing* with hunger, was brought back to his father's house.

(14) **Narrow is the way.**—Literally, *pressed*, or hemmed in between walls or rocks, like the pathway in a mountain gorge.

**Which leadeth unto life.**—Noteworthy as the first passage in our Lord's recorded teaching in which the word "life" appears as summing up all the blessedness of the kingdom. The idea is developed as we advance; the life becomes "eternal," and finally we are taught that the eternal life consists in the true and perfect knowledge of God and Christ (John xvii. 2, 3).

**Few there be that find it.**—The sad contrast between the many and the few runs through all our Lord's teaching. He comes to "save the world," and yet those whom He chooses out of the world are but as a "little flock." They are to preach the gospel, and yet the result will be but discord and division. The picture is a dark one, and yet it represents but too faithfully the impression made, I do not say on Calvinist or even Christian, but on any ethical teacher, by the actual state of mankind around us. They are, for the most part, unconscious of the greatness of their lives, and of the interests at stake in them. If there is any wider hope, it is found in hints and suggestions of the possibilities of the future (1 Pet. iii. 19; iv. 6); in the fact that the words used are emphatically present; in the belief that the short span of this life is not necessarily the whole of the discipline of a soul made for eternity; and that the new life, nascent, and feeble, and stunted here, may be quickened by some new process of education into higher energies.

(15) **Beware of false prophets.**—The sequence again is below the surface. How was the narrow way to be found? Who would act as guide? Many would offer their help who would simply lead men to the destruction which they sought to escape. Such teachers, claiming authority as inspired, there had been in the days of Isaiah and Jeremiah, and there would be again. The true gift of prophecy is always followed by its counterfeit. Even at the time when our Lord was speaking, the influence of such men as Judas of Galilee (Acts v. 37), Theudas, and other popular leaders, was still fresh in men's memories.

**Which come to you in sheep's clothing.**—The illustration implies something like the conception of the wolf disguising himself as a sheep in order to gain entrance into the fold. So far a special feature is added to the general allegory of John x. 12 and Acts xx. 29. It is possible, though not, I think, probable, that there may be some allusion to the "rough garments," the "sheep-skins and goat-skins" of Heb. xi. 37, worn by false prophets of the hermit or ascetic type.

(16) **Ye shall know them by their fruits.**—The question, What are the fruits? is not directly answered. Those who attach most importance to the ethical side of religion, see in them the practical outcome of doctrine in life, character, and deeds. Others, who live in a constant dread of heresy, dwell on doctrines rather than acts as the "fruits" by which we are to discern the false teachers and the true. Good works, they say, may be but the sheep's clothing that hides the heretic wolf. The analogy of Scriptural language, and even of that of most theologians, the familiar phrases which speak of good works as the fruits of faith and the like, are, it is believed, entirely in favour of the former view. Still more decisive are the "fruits meet for repentance" of Matt. iii. 8. We are to judge of the teaching of those who claim authority by the test of the measure in which, in the long-run, it promotes purity, peace, and holiness.

(17, 18) **Even so every good tree . . . .**—The two verses state nearly the same fact, but each presents a different aspect. First it is stated as a matter of practical experience, then the general fact is referred to a necessary law. If the tree is corrupt, *i.e.*, rotten or decayed at the core, it cannot bring forth good fruit. If there is falseness in the teaching, or in the man, it will sooner or later show itself in his life, and then, even though we judge of the doctrine on other ground, we should cease to feel confidence in the guidance of the teacher.

(19) **Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit.**—The crowds who listened must, for the most part, have recognised the words as those which they had heard before from the lips of the Baptist, and they served accordingly as a link connecting the teaching of our Lord with that of the forerunner. (Comp. Matt. iii. 10.)

(20) **Ye shall know them.**—As before, in verse 16, the word is one which implies knowledge that is full, clear, decisive—such as that to which St. Paul looks forward in the life to come (1 Cor. xiii. 12).

(21) **He that doeth the will of my Father.**—The continued stress laid on the ethical side of religion, on the nullity of the confession of a true faith (as embodied in the "Lord, Lord") without doing the will

of heaven;[a] but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. (22) Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? (23) And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you:[b] depart from me, ye that work iniquity.[c]

(24) Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine,[d] and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: (25) and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. (26) And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: (27) and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the

[a] Rom. 2. 13; Jas. 1. 22.

[b] Luke 13. 27.

[c] Ps. 6. 8.

[d] Luke 6. 47.

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of God, more than confirms the interpretation of verse 16 above given. A further development of the same thought is found in John vii. 17, and we are taught that it is by doing the will of God ourselves, or rather by *willing* to do it, that we gain the power to distinguish, so far as we need distinguish, truth from error, man's teaching from God's.

The previous words imply that the disciples had already begun to use the title Lord (Κύριος) in speaking to their Master (comp. Luke v. 8); but as that word was at the time in common use as one of courtesy (Matt. viii. 2, 6; John xx. 2), it would not necessarily follow that they had used it in all the later fulness of its meaning.

(22) **Many will say to me in that day.**—No part of the Sermon on the Mount is more marvellous in its claims than this; to those who see in Christ only a human Teacher with a higher morality than Hillel or Seneca, none more utterly incomprehensible. At the commencement of His ministry, in a discourse which, though it is spoken in the tone of authority, gives no prominence to His mission as the Messiah, He yet claims, with the calmness of assured conviction, to be the Judge before whom the faithful and the hypocrites will alike have to give an account. In "that day" (the words, though they would not suggest, as afterwards, the thought of His own advent, would yet carry the minds of men to the "great and dreadful day" of Mal. iv. 5) the words "Lord, Lord," would mean more than the expression of human courtesy.

**Have we not prophesied in thy name?**—Here, also, there is the implied calm assertion of a supernatural power, not resting in Himself alone, but imparted to His followers, and exercised, or at least claimed, by some who did not themselves fulfil the conditions of His kingdom. Here, as everywhere in the New Testament, "prophesying" is more than mere prediction, and includes the whole work of delivering a message to men, as coming directly from God.

(23) **Then will I profess unto them.**—The words form a remarkable complement to the promise, "Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven" (Matt. x. 32). The confession there recognised is more than lip-homage, and implies the loyal service of obedience. And the condemnation is pronounced not on those who have wandered from the truth, but on those who have been "workers of iniquity," or, as the word more strictly means, "of lawlessness." The words remind us of those of Ps. xv. 2, 3, xxiv. 3, 4, and are, perhaps, a transfer of what David had spoken of his ideal of his earthly kingdom to that of the kingdom of heaven which the Christ had come to found.

(24) **Whosoever.**—The Greek is more emphatically universal, *every one whosoever.*

**These sayings of mine.**—The reference to what has gone before tends, so far as it goes, to the conclusion that we have in these chapters a continuous discourse, and not a compilation of fragments. On the assumption that the Sermon on the Plain was different from that on the Mount, the recurrence of the same image there makes it probable that this or some similar parable was not an uncommon close to our Lord's discourses.

**I will liken him unto a wise man.**—The surrounding scenery may, in this as in other instances, have suggested the illustration. As in all hilly countries, the streams of Galilee rush down the torrent-beds during the winter and early spring, sweep all before them, overflow their banks, and leave beds of alluvial deposit on either side. When summer comes their waters fail (comp. Jer. xv. 18; Job vi. 15), and what had seemed a goodly river is then a tract covered with debris of stones and sand. A stranger coming to build might be attracted by the ready-prepared level surface of the sand. It would be easier to build there instead of working upon the hard and rugged rock. But the people of the land would know and mock the folly of such a builder, and he would pass (our Lord's words may possibly refer to something that had actually occurred) into a by-word of reproach. On such a house the winter torrent had swept down in its fury, and the storms had raged, and then the fair fabric, on which time and money had been expended, had given way, and fallen into a heap of ruins. Interpreting the parable in the connection in which our Lord has placed it, it is clear that the house is the general fabric of an outwardly religious life. "The rock" can be nothing else than the firm foundation of repentance and obedience, the assent of the will and affections as well as of the lips. The "sand" answers to the shifting, uncertain feelings which are with some men (the "foolish" ones of the parable) the only ground on which they act—love of praise, respect for custom, and the like. The "wind," the "rain," the "floods" hardly admit, unless by an unreal minuteness, of individual interpretation, but represent collectively the violence of persecution, of suffering, of temptations from without, beneath which all but the life which rests on the true foundation necessarily gives way.

Such is obviously the primary meaning of the parable here, but, like most other parables, it has other meanings, which, though secondary, are yet suggestive and instructive, and are not unsanctioned by the analogy of our Lord's teaching. (1.) Already He had bestowed upon one of His disciples the name of Cephas, Peter, the Rock, and in so doing had at least indicated the type of character represented by the "rock" upon which the wise man built. When He afterwards said, fall of it. (28) And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:[a] (29) for he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.

A.D. 31.

[a] Mark 1. 22; Luke 4. 32.

[b] Mark 1. 40; Luke 5. 12.

CHAPTER VIII.—(1) When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. (2) And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him,[b] saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou

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"Upon this rock will I build my Church," He was speaking in the character of a wise Master-builder who saw in fervent faith and unhesitating obedience the ground-work on which the Christian society, which He designated as His kingdom, was to rest. (2.) Personal experience and the teaching of the Spirit led men to the thought that there must be a yet deeper foundation, a rock below the rock even of obedience and holiness; and they found in Christ Himself that Rock and that Foundation (1 Cor. iii. 10, 11). Only in personal union with Him could they find the stability of will without which even their firmest purposes would be as the shifting sand.

(28) **When Jesus had ended these sayings.**—The words again point to the conclusion that the Evangelist believed that he had been recording one continuous discourse.

**The people were astonished at his doctrine.**—Better, *at his teaching;* with greater prominence given, as the words that follow show, to its manner than to its substance.

(29) **He taught them.**—The Greek implies continuity, *He was teaching.*

**As one having authority, and not as the scribes.**—Some instances have been already pointed out: the "I say unto you," which is contrasted with what had been said "to them of old time"; the assumption that He, the speaker, was the Head of the divine kingdom and the Judge of quick and dead. More striking still is the entire absence of any reference by name to the teaching of other interpreters of the Law. As a rule, the scribe hardly ever gave his exposition without at least beginning by what had been said by Hillel or by Shammai, by Rabbi Joseph or Rabbi Meir, depending almost or altogether upon what had thus been ruled before, as much as an English lawyer depends on his precedents. In contrast with all this, our Lord fills the people with amazement by speaking to them as One who has a direct message from God. It is the prophet, or rather, perhaps, the king, who speaks, and not the scribe.

## VIII.

(1) We enter here on a series of events, following, in St. Matthew's arrangement, on the great discourse. They are common to St. Mark and St. Luke, but are not narrated, as the following table will show, in the same order:—

| St. Matthew. | St. Mark. | St. Luke. |
|---|---|---|
| (1.) The leper (viii. 1—4). | (1.) Peter's wife's mother (i. 29—31). | (1.) Peter's wife's mother (iv. 38, 39). |
| (2.) The servant of the centurion (viii. 5—13). | (2.) The leper (i. 40—45). | (2.) The leper (v. 12—15). |
| (3.) Peter's wife's mother (viii.14, 15). | (3.) The stilling of the storm (iv. 35—41). | (3.) The servant of the centurion (vii. 1—10). |
| (4.) The excuses of two disciples (viii. 18—22). | (4.) The Gadarene demoniac (v. 1—20). | (4.) The stilling of the storm (viii. 22—25). |
| (5.) The stilling of the storm (viii. 23—27). | — | (5.) The Gadarene demoniac (viii. 26—39). |
| (6.) The Gadarene demoniacs (viii. 28—33). | — | (6.) The excuses of two disciples (ix. 57—62). |

A comparison such as this, especially if we take into account the narratives which in St. Mark and St. Luke come between those which St. Matthew makes to follow close one upon another, and the apparent notes of succession in each case, is enough to show, once for all, the difficulty of harmonising the Gospel narratives with any certainty. Three conclusions may fairly be received as all but certain. (1.) The independence of each record. It is scarcely conceivable that St. Mark or St. Luke would have departed so widely from St. Matthew's order had they had his Gospel before them. (2.) The derivation of all three from earlier records, written or oral, each embracing some few acts or discourses of our Lord. (3.) The absence of any direct evidence as to the order of these events, so that each writer was often left to his own discretion, or to some internal principle of grouping.

In dealing with such cases, therefore, while the parallel narratives in the other Gospels will be noticed, so far as they make the record here more vivid and complete, there will seldom be any attempt to discuss elaborately the order in which they stand.

(2) **A leper.**—The discussion of leprosy, as to its nature, symptoms, and causes, would be at once long and difficult. The word, which is Greek and not Hebrew in its origin, has probably been used with varying extent of meaning, sometimes including elephantiasis, or even cancer. Even in its narrower meaning, as used by Hippocrates, leprosy was subdivided into three kinds: (1) the mealy, (2) the white, (3) the black, according to the appearance presented by the portions of diseased flesh. Confining ourselves to the Biblical form of the disease, we note (1) its probable origin in the squalor and wretchedness of the Egyptian bondage. It was the "botch," or plague "of Egypt" (Deut. xxviii. 27). In the Egyptian legends of the Exodus, indeed, the Israelites were said to have been expelled because they were lepers. (2) Its main features were the appearance of a bright spot on the flesh, whiter than the rest, spreading, inflaming, cracking; an ichorous humour oozing from the cracks, the skin becoming hard, scaly, "as white as snow" (Ex. iv. 6; 2 Kings v. 27). One so affected was regarded as unclean; his touch brought defilement (Lev. xiii. 3, 11, 15). He was looked upon as smitten with a divine plague, and cases like those of Miriam and Gehazi gave strength to the belief. He had to live apart from his fellows, to wear on his brow the outward sign of separation, to cry out the words of warning, "Unclean, unclean" (Lev. xiii. 45). The idea which lay at the bottom of this separation seems to have been one of abhorrence rather than precaution. The disease was loathsome, but there is no evidence that it was contagious, or even believed to be contagious. At the stage in which it reached its height, and the whole body was covered with the botch and scabs, the man was, by a strange contrast, declared to be ceremonially clean (Lev. xiii. 13), and in this state, therefore, the leper might return to his kindred, and take his place among the worshippers of the synagogue. In the case now before us, the man would appear to have been as yet in the intermediate stage. St. Luke describes him, however, as "full of leprosy."

**Worshipped him**—*i.e.*, as in St. Mark, "falling on canst make me clean. (3) And Jesus put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. (4) And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.[a]

(5) And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum,[b] there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, (6) and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

[a] Lev. 14. 4.

[b] Luke 7. 1.

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his knees," or in St. Luke, "falling on his face," in the highest form of Eastern homage. The act gave to the word "Lord" the emphasis of one, at least, of its higher meanings.

**If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.**—The words imply either that he had seen or heard of our Lord's works of healing, or that His words had impressed him with the belief that the Teacher must have a power extending to acts also. There does not appear to have been any previous case of leprosy miraculously cleansed. The words of the man involve a singular mingling of faith and distrust. He believes in the power, he does not as yet believe in the will. Can it stoop to one so foul as he? If he shared the common feeling that leprosy was the punishment of sin, he might ask himself, Will He pity and relieve one so sinful?

(3) **Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him.**—The act was itself a proof at once of the will and the power to heal. He did not fear becoming unclean by that contact, and was therefore not subject to the law that forbade the touch. And He met the one element of doubt in the sufferer's mind by the words—yet more, perhaps, the tone or look that told of pity—"I will; be thou clean." St. Mark adds, "Had compassion on him."

**Immediately his leprosy was cleansed.**—We may venture to picture the process to our minds: the skin cleansed, the sores closed, the diseased whiteness giving way to the tints and tones of health.

(4) **See thou tell no man.**—St. Mark adds, with his usual vividness, "straitly charged," or vehemently urged him, and "forthwith sent him away." The reasons of the command are not given, but are not far to seek. (1.) The offering of the gift was an act of obedience to the Law (Lev. xiv. 10, 21, 22), and was therefore the right thing for the man to do. In this way also our Lord showed that He had not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfil. (2.) It was the appointed test of the reality and completeness of the cleansing work. (3.) It was better for the man's own spiritual life to cherish his gratitude than to waste it in many words.

So much lies on the surface. But as the treatment of leprosy in the Mosaic code was clearly symbolical rather than sanitary, and dealt with the disease as the special type of sin in its most malignant form, so in the healing of the leper we may fairly see the symbol of our Lord's power to purify and save from sin, and in His touching the leper, the close fellowship into which He entered with our unclean nature, that through His touch it might be made clean. The miracle, like most other miracles, was also a parable in act.

(5) In St. Luke the narrative follows immediately upon the Sermon on the Plain; in St. Matthew (the healing of the leper intervening), upon the Sermon on the Mount. The juxtaposition in both cases seems to imply a connection between the teaching and the act that had fixed itself on men's minds. The act was, indeed, chiefly memorable for the teaching to which it led. A comparison of the two narratives suggests the thought that St. Matthew records the miracle more with reference to the associated teaching, St. Luke after more close inquiry into the details and circumstances. Here, *e.g.*, the centurion is said to have come to our Lord himself; but from St. Luke's report we learn that he never came at all in person, but sent first the elders of the Jews, and then his friends.

**A centurion.**—The presence of a centurion (a word originally meaning the commander of a hundred soldiers, but, like most words of the kind, afterwards used with a greater latitude of meaning) implied that of a garrison stationed at Capernaum to preserve order. So we find a centurion with his soldiers at Cæsarea (Acts x. 1). At Jerusalem, it would appear, it was thought necessary to station a *Chiliarch*, or "chief captain" of a thousand soldiers (Acts xxi. 31); and the same word meets us as connected with the birthday feast of the Tetrarch Antipas (Mark vi. 21).

Here, as in the case of Cornelius, the faith and the life of Judaism (seen, we may well believe, to more advantage in the villages of Galilee than amid the factions of Jerusalem) had made a deep impression on the soldier's mind. He found a purity, reverence, simplicity, and nobleness of life which he had not found elsewhere; and so he "loved the nation" (Luke vii. 5), and built anew the synagogue of the town. It is probable, as has been already said, that among the ruins of Tell-Hûm, identified as Capernaum, we have the remains of the very fabric thus erected. And he, in like manner, had made a favourable impression upon the Jews of that city. They felt his love for them, were ready to go on his errand, to support his prayer with all earnestness, to attest his worth. To one whose work had been, like that of St. Luke, to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, all these incidents would be precious, as early tokens of that breaking-down of barriers, that brotherhood of mankind in Christ, of which the Apostle who was his companion was the great preacher.

(6) **My servant.**—The Greek word might mean either "servant" or "boy." The former meaning is the more common, and is fixed as the meaning here by St. Luke's use of the word which means strictly "slave." He is described as paralysed, but the words "grievously tormented" point to more acute suffering than is common in that form of disease, and imply either something like rheumatic fever, or tetanus, or the special kind of paralysis which benumbs the muscles only, and affects the nerves of sensation with sharp pain. A like case of paralysis with agonising pain is found in 1 Macc. ix. 55, 56. The fact that this suffering touched his master's heart with pity was itself a sign of something exceptionally good in the centurion's character. It was not thus, for the most part, that the wealthy Romans dealt with their slaves when they were sick. St. Luke does not state the nature of the disease, perhaps as not having been able to satisfy himself as to its precise nature, but simply describes the slave as "ill, and at the point to die," and adds that he was "dear" (literally, *precious*) to his master. His narra-

(7) And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. (8) The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. (9) For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*. (10) When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. (11) And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. (12) But the children of the kingdom shall be cast

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tive states further that the centurion sent the elders, "having heard of Jesus." The report had obviously been such as to lead him to look on the Teacher as endowed with a supernatural power. It may have come from the elders of the synagogue themselves; but the facts of the case make it probable that he had heard specifically of the healing of the "nobleman's son" at Capernaum recorded by St. John (iv. 46—54). There he had found a precedent which now determined his own line of action, showing that a word from those lips might be enough to heal without touch or even presence.

(7) **I will come and heal him.**—In St. Luke's report the words are omitted, but they are implied in our Lord's act in going with the elders of the synagogue. While He went, some one, it would seem, ran on in front to tell the centurion that his prayer was heard. Then, in his humility, he sends off some of his friends with the message, which St. Matthew records as if it had come from his own lips.

(8) **Lord, I am not worthy.**—In St. Luke's report, the friends deliver the message as beginning with "Trouble not thyself," the word being a colloquial one, which starting from the idea of flaying, or mangling, passed into that of "worrying," "vexing," and the like. The sense of unworthiness implied at once the consciousness of his own sins, and the recognition of the surpassing holiness and majesty of the Teacher he addressed.

**Speak the word only.**—This was the special proof of the speaker's faith. He had risen above the thought of a magic influence, operating by touch or charm, to that of a delegated power depending only on the will of Him who possessed it.

(9) **For I am a man under authority.**—He gives, not without a certain *naïveté*, the process of reasoning by which he had been led to this conviction. His own experience had taught that in every well-organised system a delegated authority could, in its turn, be delegated to others. The personal presence of the centurion was not wanted where he could send his soldier or his slave to act on his orders. Might he not reason on this analogy, and infer from it that in God's kingdom also One whom He endued with power would have His ministers at hand, the unknown forces (personal or otherwise, he did not care to ask) that govern life and death, to execute His will?

(10) **He marvelled.**—The fact is stated in both records, and is not without significance in its bearing on the reality of our Lord's human consciousness. Facts came to Him, in that true humanity, as to other men, unlooked-for, and as with a novelty that caused surprise.

**I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.**—The nature of the faith we have already seen. Israelites who sought our Lord's healing work, craved for presence, or touch, even if it were only the hem of the garment; sometimes, as in the case of the blind, and dumb, and deaf, for yet more material signs. Here was one who believed in the power of the word of the Christ, and asked for nothing more.

(11) St. Luke does not give the words that follow, and the omission is significant. Either he did not know of them, and then we must infer the entire independence of his record, or knowing them, he, writing for Gentiles, thought it best to omit words here which our Lord had afterwards repeated, and which he had therefore another opportunity of recording (Luke xiii. 28). Such verbal reproduction of what had been said before was, it will be remembered, entirely after our Lord's manner.

**Many shall come from the east and west.**—It is clear that our Lord saw in the centurion the first-fruits of the wide harvest of the future. Like the words of the Baptist in Matt. iii. 9, what He now said contained, by implication, the whole gospel which St. Paul preached to the Gentiles. "East and west," even without the formal addition of "north and south," which we find in the parallel passage of Luke xiii. 29, were used as limits that included all the nations of the earth.

**Shall sit down.**—Literally, *shall recline*, as at the table of a feast; that being, as in the phrase of Abraham's bosom, the received parable of the blessedness of the kingdom.

(12) **The children of the kingdom.**—The form of the phrase is a Hebraism, indicating, as in "the children of the bride-chamber," those who belonged to the kingdom, *i.e.*, in this case, the Israelites, to whom the kingdom of heaven had, in the first instance, been promised, the natural heirs who had forfeited their inheritance.

**Into outer darkness.**—Strictly, *the outer darkness.* The words continue the imagery of the previous clause, the darkness outside the king's palace being contrasted with the interior, blazing with lamps and torches.

**There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**—Both words in the Greek have the emphasis of the article, "*the* weeping" *par excellence.* The two words are found in combination six times in St. Matthew, and once in St. Luke (xiii. 28). In their literal meaning they express that intensest form of human anguish in which it ceases to be articulate. The latter word, or rather the cognate verb, is used also to express rage (Acts vii. 54). Their spiritual meaning we naturally connect with the misery of those who are excluded from the joy and blessedness of the completed kingdom, and that is, doubtless, what they ultimately point to. We must remember, however, that the "kingdom of heaven" was a term of very varying significance, and that our Lord had proclaimed that that kingdom was at hand, and taught men, by parable out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (13) And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, *so* be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

(14) And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.[a] (15) And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.

(16) When the even was come,[b] they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with *his* word, and healed all that were sick: (17) that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare *our* sicknesses.[c]

(18) Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side. (19) And a certain scribe came,[d] and said unto

[b] Mark 1. 32; Luke 4. 40.

[c] Isa. 53. 4; 1 Pet. 2. 24.

[a] Mark 1. 29; Luke 4. 38.

[d] Luke 9. 57.

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and otherwise, that it included more than the life after death. We may accordingly rightly look for like "springing and germinant accomplishments" of the words now before us. Men came "from the east and west," when the Gentiles were admitted into the Church of Christ. The children of the kingdom were left in the "outer darkness" when they were self-excluded from fellowship with that Church and its work among the nations. The outbursts of envy and rage recorded in the Acts (v. 33; xiii. 45) illustrate this aspect of "the weeping and gnashing of teeth."

(13) **As thou hast believed.**—The words were, of course, sent as a message. Better, *As thou didst believe*—referring to his one great act of faith.

(14) **And when Jesus was come into Peter's house.**—St. Mark (i. 29) and St. Luke (iv. 38) relate more specifically that it was on the Sabbath, and that our Lord had previously taught in the synagogue and healed a demoniac. The sons of Zebedee and of Jona had all been present, and when the service was over they came to the house in which Peter apparently (though born in Bethsaida, John i. 44) had settled on his marriage.

**His wife's mother.**—The fact of St. Peter's marriage has not unnaturally been almost unduly prominent in the Protestant argument against the enforced celibacy of the clergy. "Here," it has been said, "is the Apostle from whom the Bishop of Rome claims succession, married when called to his office, and never separated from his wife, and yet Rome declares the marriage of priests to be unlawful, and stigmatises it as worse than concubinage." Telling as it may sound, however, it is after all only an *argumentum ad hominem.* Had the case been otherwise, we should not have admitted that the celibacy of the chief of the Apostles was a ground for compelling all bishops, elders, and deacons of the Church to follow his example. And all that can be urged, as the case stands, is that there is an inconsistency in accepting these facts, and yet treating marriage as *incompatible* with the sacred office of the ministry. The Church of Rome might answer, that experience, or the teaching of the Spirit, or the moral authority of the saints and Fathers of the Church, outweighed the inference from St. Peter's example, and the question must be discussed on wider ethical and social, as well as Scriptural, grounds. In that argument, it is believed, those who advocate Christian liberty (1 Cor. ix. 5) as most in harmony with the mind of Christ are not likely to get the worst of it.

**Sick of a fever.**—St. Luke, with a kind of medical precision, adds, "with a great fever," and that they (Peter, John, and the others) asked Him about her, as if consulting about a case of which they almost despaired.

(15) **She arose, and ministered unto them.**—The fact is stated as showing the completeness of the work of healing. The "great fever" had not left behind it its usual sequel of weakness and exhaustion.

(16) **When the even was come.**—Or, as St. Luke has it, "While the sun was setting." There were two reasons why the time should be thus specified. (1) It was natural that the sick should be brought in the cool of the evening, rather than in the scorching heat of the afternoon; and (2) it was the Sabbath, and the feeling which made the Pharisees question the lawfulness of a man's carrying the bed on which he had been lying (John v. 10), would probably have deterred the friends of the sick from bringing them as long as it lasted. But with sunset the Sabbath came to a close, and then they would feel themselves free to act. The prominence given to "those that were possessed with devils," both by St. Matthew and St. Mark, shows that it was the work of the Sabbath morning that had most impressed itself on their minds.

(17) **Himself took our infirmities.**—The citation is interesting as showing St. Matthew's way of dealing with Messianic prophecies. We see in Isa. liii. throughout a picture of our Lord's spiritual work of redemption, and the words quoted are almost the cardinal text for the special view of the atonement, which sees in the sufferings of Christ the freely accepted penalty that was due for the transgressions of mankind. The Evangelist, with the memory of that evening present to his mind, saw them fulfilled in this removal of the "infirmities" and "sicknesses" that oppressed the bodies of men. It was not merely that He came, as one of boundless wealth, who might scatter alms broadcast, but that He Himself "took" and "bore" the sufferings which He removed. He suffered with those He saw suffer. The power to heal was intimately connected with the intensity of His sympathy, and so was followed (as analogous works of love are followed in those who are most Christ-like in their lives) by weariness and physical exhaustion. What is related by St. Mark and St. Luke of our Lord's seeking out the refuge of solitude at the earliest dawn of the day that followed, is entirely in harmony with the view thus suggested.

(18) **To depart unto the other side**—*i.e.*, the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Here, too, though less conspicuously than in the other Gospels, there is indicated the yearning for a time of rest and retirement.

(19) **A certain scribe came.**—The facts that follow are placed by St. Luke, as we have seen, in quite another stage of our Lord's ministry. The fact that it was a scribe that came is striking, as showing that the impression made by our Lord's teaching was not

him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. (20) And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head. (21) And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. (22) But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

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confined to the "common people" that "heard him gladly." As Nicodemus had already come confessing that He was a "Teacher come from God," so in Galilee there was one whom the Sermon on the Mount, or some like discourse, had led to volunteer at least the show of discipleship.

(20) **The foxes have holes.**—Our Lord's answer seems to indicate that it was hardly more than the show. The scribe had not counted the cost, and, like the young ruler that had great possessions, needed to be taught. To follow the Son of Man was not to be the adherent of a new sect or party, or the servant of a king marching onward to an earthly throne, but to share in poverty, privation, homelessness.

**Nests.**—The word is sufficient for popular use, but, strictly speaking, the "nest" belongs only to the brooding season of a bird's life, and the Greek word has the wider meaning of "shelter."

**The Son of man.**—The passage is remarkable as the first in this Gospel in which the name occurs which was afterwards so prominent in our Lord's teaching, and this is accordingly the right place for tracing the history and significance of that title.

As found in the Old Testament, the term is the literal translation of the Hebrew *ben-adam*, the latter word expressing the generic weakness and frailty of man's nature, as the Hebrew *ish* expresses its greatness and its strength. It stands therefore as representing man idealised under that one aspect of his being. "What is man that Thou art mindful of him, and the *son of man* that Thou visitest him?" (Ps. viii. 4); "Put not your trust in princes, nor in *the son of man* in whom is no help" (Ps. cxlvi. 3), are instances of its use in this meaning. In some passages our version expresses the same thought by rendering the "*sons of Adam*" and the "*sons of Ish*" as "low and high" (Ps. xlix. 2), or the former word alone as "men of low degree" (Ps. lxii. 9). The title received a new prominence about the time of the Captivity from its use in Ezekiel's prophecies. There it appears frequently (not fewer than eighty-seven times in all) as the title with which the prophet is addressed by the voice of Jehovah. We can scarcely doubt that it was used there in all the fulness of its earlier meaning, and was designed to teach the prophet that, amid all the greatness of his work, he was still subject to all the weakness and temptations of man's nature, and ought therefore to have compassion on their infirmities. Yet a fresh aspect of the name was presented in the mysterious vision of Dan. vii. 13, in which "One like the *Son of Man* came with the clouds of heaven, and was brought to the Ancient of Days, . . . and there was given unto Him dominion and glory and a kingdom." The word used is not, it is true, *ben-adam*, but *bar-enosh*, but there is no traceable distinction of meaning between the two. Here, then, the thought manifestly was this, that One who shared man's weakness, should also be a sharer of God's glory, and be the Head of the divine kingdom. The prominence which the Maccabean struggles gave to the predictions of Daniel drew attention to the name as it had thus been used. The "Son of Man" became one of the titles of the expected Christ. The Targum or Paraphrase of the Psalms (probably earlier than our Lord's ministry) explains even such a passage as Ps. lxxx. 17 ("the son of man whom thou madest so strong for thine own self") as referring to the Christ. So when the crowd at Jerusalem are questioning in their hearts whether Jesus was the Christ, they are not startled at this application of the name, and their question, "Who is this Son of Man?" is the utterance of their wonder that things so unlike what they expected of the Christ should be predicted of One who claimed the title (John xii. 34). It was accordingly, with these ideas attached to it—involving at once fellowship with the lowest of the heirs of our humanity, and yet also participation in the eternal glory of the Highest—that our Lord claimed the title, and used it with such marvellous frequency. We might almost say that it serves as the chief connecting-link between the teaching of the first three Gospels and the fourth. It appears thirty-two times in St. Matthew, fourteen in St. Mark, twenty-six in St. Luke, and twelve times in St. John. It is remarkable that it never passed into the current language of the Apostolic Church, nor into the theological or liturgical phraseology of Christendom. It is not used in any one of the Epistles. Outside the Gospels it is found only in the exclamation of Stephen (Acts vii. 56), with a manifest reference to Dan. vii. 13, and possibly in the visions of the Apocalypse (Rev. i. 13; xiv. 14). The minds of believers loved to dwell on the glory of the risen Christ, and apparently looked on this as belonging rather to the time of His humiliation. Its absence from the other books of the New Testament, and its presence in the Gospels is, at all events, an indication that the latter were not the after-growth of a later age.

(21) **Suffer me first to go and bury my father.**—A curious tradition, preserved by Clement of Alexandria, says that the disciple who came with this request was Philip. Nothing in the Gospel history, however, suggests this. Philip had been called before, and had obeyed the call (John i. 43). All that we can say is that it may have been so, and that he may at this stage of his spiritual growth have shrunk from the fresh activity of actual service in the work of evangelising. The form of the petition may mean either (1) that his father was then actually dead, and that the disciple asked leave to remain and pay the last honours to his remains, or (2) that he asked to remain with his father till his death. The latter seems by far the most probable. In the East burial followed so immediately on death that the former would hardly have involved more than the delay of a few hours. In the latter case the request was, in fact, a plea for indefinite postponement. This at least fits in best with the apparent severity of our Lord's answer.

(22) **Let the dead bury their dead.**—The point of the half-epigrammatic, half-proverbial saying, lies in the contrast between the two meanings of the word "dead." "Let those who have no spiritual life linger in the circle of outward routine duties, and sacrifice the highest spiritual possibilities of their nature to their fulfilment. Those who are really living will do the work to which their Master calls them, and leave the

(23) And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. (24) And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea,[a] insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. (25) And his disciples came to *him*, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. (26) And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. (27) But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

(28) And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils,[b] coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might

[a] Mark 4. 37; Luke 8. 23.

[b] Mark 5. 1; Luke 8. 26.

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lower conventional duties to be done or left undone as the events of their life shall order." Something there was, we may be sure, in the inward state of the disciple which called for the sternness of the rebuke. He had been called to a living work: he was resting in a dead one.

(23) The two narratives that follow are brought together in all three Gospels; but St. Mark and St. Luke place them, as we have seen, after the parables which St. Matthew gives in chapter xiii.

**Entered into a ship.**—The better MSS. give, as often elsewhere, "*the* ship," or boat—*i.e.*, one which, belonging possibly to Peter or the sons of Zebedee, was always ready at their Master's service. St. Mark adds that "they took Him, even as He was, in the boat," the words indicating apparently extreme exhaustion from the fatigue of teaching. This, we learn, was followed by immediate sleep as He lay in the stern on the boat's cushion as a pillow.

(24) **There arose a great tempest.**—Storms such as that here described are of common occurrence in all inland seas. The wind sweeps through the narrow mountain valleys, and the sea, which a few minutes before was smooth as glass, is at once rough with the white crests of the foaming waves. The ship was on the point of sinking, as the waves dashed over it while it was in the trough between them. It was beginning to be filled with water, and still He slept.

(25) **Lord, save us: we perish.**—As given by St. Mark the words indicate even more of the impatience of panic: "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" They began to think that He was indifferent to their safety, and believing, it may be, that He Himself had a charmed life, they were half angry at that indifference.

(26) **Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?**—St. Luke puts the question more strongly: "Where is your faith?" as though it had all drifted away under the pressure of their fears. Yet the word "of little faith" was singularly appropriate. They had not altogether lost their trust in Him, but they had not learnt the lesson of the centurion's faith, and were only at ease when they heard His voice, and saw that He was watching over them.

**Rebuked the winds and the sea.**—This seems to have been almost, so to say, our Lord's formula in working miracles. The fever (Luke iv. 39), the frenzy of the demoniac (Mark ix. 25), the tempest, are all treated as if they were hostile and rebel forces that needed to be restrained. St. Mark, with his usual vividness, gives the very words of the rebuke: "Peace, be still"—literally, *be dumb, be muzzled*, as though the howling wind was a maniac to be gagged and bound.

**There was a great calm.**—As with the fever in verse 15, so here, the work was at once instantaneous and complete. There was no after-swell such as is commonly seen for hours after a storm.

(27) **The men marvelled.**—This use of so vague a term as "men," as applied to the disciples, is so exceptional as to suggest the thought that there were others in the boat with them. The marvel was not without a "great fear" (Mark iv. 41). The Presence among them was mightier even than they had thought, and the elements, which seemed far more removed from human control than leprosy or fever, were yet subject to His sovereignty.

The spiritual application of the miracle lies so near the surface that it has almost become one of the common-places of sermons and hymns. And yet there is a profound fitness in it which never ceases to be fresh. The boat is the Church of Christ, and it sails across the ocean of the world's history to the "other side" of the life beyond the grave. The wind is the blast of persecution, and the Lord of the Church seems as though He were asleep, and heard not the cry of the sufferers, and the disciples are faint-hearted and afraid. And then He hears their prayer, and the storm of the persecution ceases, and there is a great calm, during which the Church goes on its way, and men learn to feel that it carries more than Cæsar and his fortunes.

(28) **The country of the Gergesenes.**—The exact determination of the locality presents many difficulties. In all the three Gospels we find various readings, of which the best supported are Gadarenes in St. Matthew, and Gerasenes in St. Mark and St. Luke. "Gergesenes" is, however, found in some MSS. of high authority, and the variations are obviously of very early date. The main facts as to the three regions thus indicated are as follows:—

(1.) Gadara was a city east of the Sea of Galilee, about sixteen miles from Tiberias. It is identified with the modern *Um Keis*, the ruins of which are more than two miles in circumference, and stand at the north-west extremity of the mountains of Gilead, near the south-east corner of the Lake. The tombs of the city, chambers in the limestone rock often more than twenty feet square, are its most conspicuous feature, and are, indeed, the sole abode of its present inhabitants. Under the Roman occupation it was important enough to have two amphitheatres and a long colonnaded street.

(2.) Gerasa was a city in the Gilead district, twenty miles east of the Jordan, described sometimes as belonging to Cœle-Syria, sometimes to Arabia. It also has ruins which indicate the former splendour of the city. Of these two, it is clear that Gadara fits in better with all the circumstances of the narrative; and if "Gerasenes" is more than the mistake of a transcriber, it could only be because the name was used vaguely for the whole Gilead district. The reading "Gadarenes" in that case would probably come from some one better acquainted with the position of the two cities.

pass by that way. (29) And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? (30) And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding. (31) So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us

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(3.) There was no city named Gergesa, but the name Gergesenes was probably connected with the older Girgashites, one of the Canaanite races that occupied the country before the invasion of Israel (Gen. x. 16; xv. 21; Josh. iii. 10; xxiv. 11; *et al.*). Apparently, however, from the last passage referred to, they were on the western side of the Jordan. It is, on the whole, more likely that the reading was a mistake, than that the old tribe still remained with its old name; but it is possible that the name of Gerasa may represent an altered form of *Girgashim.*

**Two possessed with devils.**—St. Mark and St. Luke speak of "one" only. A like difference meets us in St. Matthew's "two blind men" at Jericho (Matt. xx. 30) as compared with the "one" of the two other Gospels. The natural explanation is that, in each case, one was more prominent than the other in speech or act, and so was remembered and specified, while the other was either forgotten or left unnoticed. The difference, as far as it goes, is obviously in favour of the independence of St. Matthew's narrative. The "tombs" in the neighbourhood of Gadara, hewn out in the rock, have been already mentioned. To dwell in such tombs was, to the ordinary Jew, a thing from which he shrank with abhorrence, as bringing pollution, and to choose such an abode was therefore a sign of insanity.

St. Luke adds that he wore no clothes (*i.e.*, strictly, no outer garment; the word does not imply actual nakedness). St. Mark (whose account is the fullest of the three) notices that he had often been bound with fetters and chains, and that, with the abnormal strength often found in mania, he had set himself free from them. The insanity was so homicidal that "none could pass by that way," so suicidal that he was ever cutting himself with stones, howling day and night in the wildness of his paroxysms.

For a full discussion of the subject of demoniacal possession, see *Excursus* at the end of this Gospel.

(29) **They cried out, saying, . .** —St. Mark adds that the demoniac, seeing Jesus from afar, ran and did homage ("worshipped" in the English version) to Him, and (with St. Luke) gives the fuller form of his cry, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God?" It is remarkable that this is the only instance in which that name is addressed to our Lord, though it is used of Him before His birth in Luke i. 32. A probable explanation is, that the name "the Most High God" was frequently used in the formulæ of exorcism, and so had become familiar to the demoniacs. So, the damsel with a spirit of divination, in Acts xvi. 17, speaks of St. Paul and his companions as servants of the Most High God. The question meets us, Was the discernment that led to the confession altogether preternatural, or had the possessed man heard of the fame of Jesus? But if he had only heard, how came he to recognise the Prophet "a great way off?" Possibly the true explanation lies involved in the mystery of the psychological state into which the sufferer had passed under the frightful influences that were working in him.

**To torment us before the time.**—So the abode of Dives is "a place of torment" (Luke xvi. 28), and the ministers of judgment are the "tormentors" (Matt. xviii. 34). The man identifies himself with the demons; looks forward, when the hour of judgment shall come, to condemnation; and claims, in the meantime, to be let alone. Who that has been called to minister to the souls of men in their demoniac state has not often heard language all but identical? The words added by St. Mark are singularly characteristic: "I adjure thee by God." It is as if the man had listened so often to the formulæ of exorcists that they had become, as it were, his natural speech, and he too will try their effect as an adjuration. The command given to the "unclean spirit" to "come out of the man" had, we find from St. Mark and St. Luke, been given previously, as the man drew near, and was the occasion of this frenzied cry.

At this stage, too, they add, our Lord asked the question, "What is thy name?" The most terrible phenomenon of possession, as of many forms of insanity, was the divided consciousness which appears in this case. Now the demon speaks, and now the man. The question would recall to the man's mind that he once had a human name, with all its memories of human fellowship. It was a stage, even in spite of the paroxysm that followed, in the process of recovery, in so far as it helped to disentangle him from the confusion between himself and the demons which caused his misery. But, at first, the question seems only to increase the evil: "My name is Legion, for we are many." The irresistible might, the full array of the Roman legion, with its six thousand soldiers, seemed to the demoniac the one adequate symbol of the wild, uncontrollable impulses of passion and of dread that were sweeping through his soul. It would hardly have seemed possible that the force of literalism could have led any interpreter to infer the actual presence of six thousand demons, each with a personality of His own, and to calculate accordingly the number that must have entered into each of the two thousand swine: and yet this has been done.

(30) **An herd of many swine.**—We are surprised at first to find swine kept in a country where their flesh could not be an article of food. But though the Jews did not eat pork, Roman soldiers did, and the swine may have been kept to supply the wants of the legion with which the man was familiar. The pun of Augustus as to Herod's swine and son (see Note on Matt. ii. 16) seems to imply that the king kept them on his estates for some such purpose.

(31) **So the devils besought him.**—As St. Mark gives the words, "that He should not send them out of the country," or district, in which they were; as in St. Luke's report, "that He would not command them to go out into the deep," *i.e.*, the abyss, the "bottomless pit" of Rev. ix. 1, 2, 11. The words of the man are as those of the demons with whom he identifies himself. He shrinks from the thought of wandering in dry places, "seeking rest, and finding none" (Matt. xii. 43), or being compelled to flee, like Asmodeus, into "the utmost parts of Egypt" (Tobit viii. 3), or, worst fate of all, to be sent into the "abyss," which was the ultimate doom of evil. And so he, as one with them, suggests another alternative: "If Thou cast us out, send us into

out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. (32) And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. (33) And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils. (34) And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought *him* that he would depart out of their coasts.

A.D. 31.

CHAPTER IX.—(1) And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city. (2) And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy,[a]

[a] Mark 2. 3; Luke 5. 18.

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the herd of swine. If the power to terrify and disturb men is taken from us, let us, at least, retain the power to destroy brutes."

(32) **He said unto them, Go.**—Men have asked sometimes, in scorn, why the word was spoken; why permission was given for a destructive work which seemed alike needless and fruitless. The so-called rationalistic explanation, that the demoniacs drove the swine down the cliff in a last paroxysm of frenzy, is no solution of the difficulty, for, even if that hypothesis were on other grounds tenable, it is clear that our Lord's words sanctioned what they did. We are at least on the right track in suggesting that only in some such way could the man be delivered from the inextricable confusion between himself and the unclean spirits in which he had been involved. Not till he saw the demoniac forces that had oppressed him transferred to the bodies of other creatures, and working on them the effects which they had wrought on him, could he believe in his own deliverance. Those who measure rightly the worth of a human spirit thus restored to itself, to its fellow-men, and to God, will not think that the destruction of brute life was too dear a price to pay for its restoration. Other subordinate ends—such, *e g.*, as that it was a penalty on those who kept the unclean beasts for their violation of the Law, or that it taught men that it was through their indulgence of the swinish nature in themselves that they became subject to the darker and more demoniac passions—have been suggested with more or less plausibility.

**Down a steep place.**—Literally, *down the cliff.*

(34) **The whole city**—*i.e.*, the population of Gadara or Gerasa (more probably the former), according to the reading which we adopt in verse 28. St. Mark and St. Luke add, that they found the demoniac "clothed, and in his right mind, sitting at the feet of Jesus," in the clinging gratitude of faith. The narrative half suggests the thought that the garment which he now wore as the outward sign of a new self-reverence had been supplied by the pity of the disciples.

**Besought him that he would depart.**—It was characteristic of the wild, half-heathen population that they were led to look on the Prophet who had wrought so great a work as a Destroyer rather than a Saviour, and therefore shrank from His presence among them. Not so with the demoniac himself. He felt, with a faith which was real, though weak, as if he were only safe while close to his Deliverer. He followed Him to the boat, and as He was in the act of embarking (Mark v. 18), prayed that he might be with Him. But this was not the discipline which was needed for his spiritual health. Retirement, renewed fellowship with his kindred in his own house, the quiet witness borne there that the Lord had had compassion on him—this was better for him than the work of a more avowed discipleship. And so he went his way "proclaiming," or "preaching," what Jesus had done for him—a true evangelist to a people whose panic terror showed that they were as yet in darkness and the shadow of death.

## IX.

(1) Here, again, the order of the facts narrated varies so much in the three Gospels that the labours of the harmonist are baffled.

| ST. MATTHEW. | ST. MARK. | ST. LUKE. |
|---|---|---|
| (1.) The Paralytic, 1—8. | ii. 1—12. | v. 18—26. |
| (2.) The call of Matthew, &c., 9—17. | ii. 13—22. | v. 27—39. |
| (3.) Jairus, and the woman with an issue of blood, 18—26. | v. 21—43. | viii. 41—56. |
| (4.) The two blind, 27—31. | —— | —— |
| (5.) The dumb, 32—34. | —— | xi. 14. |

It will be seen that (1) and (2) are grouped together in all three, as are the two events in (3), but beyond this we cannot trace any systematic order, and the apparent notes of sequence are so far misleading. In this case, St. Matthew makes the return to Capernaum follow the healing of the Gadarene demoniacs. St. Mark and St. Luke place it after that of the leper, but as if they were uncertain as to its exact position, "after certain days," or "on one of the days."

**Ship.**—Better, *boat.*

**Into his own city.**—St. Mark states definitely Capernaum, which had become His "own city" since His departure from Nazareth (Matt. iv. 13). That city, though the home of His childhood, is never so described.

(2) **Behold, they brought to him.**—From the other Gospels we learn:—(1) That He was teaching (Luke v. 17) in a house (apparently, from what follows, from the upper room of a house), while the people stood listening in the courtyard. (2) That the courtyard was crowded, so that even the gateway leading into the street was filled (Mark ii. 2). (3) That among the hearers were Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, who had come, not only from "every village of Galilee and Judæa," but also "from Jerusalem." The last fact is important as one of the few traces in the first three Gospels of an unrecorded ministry in Jerusalem, and, as will be seen, throws light on much that follows. They had apparently come to see how the new Teacher, who had so startled them at Jerusalem, was carrying on His work in Galilee, and, as far as they could, to hinder it. (4) That "the power of the Lord was present to heal them" (Luke v. 17), *i.e.*, that as He taught, the sick were brought to Him, and, either by word or touch, were cured.

**A man sick of the palsy.**—St. Matthew and St.

lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. (3) And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This *man* blasphemeth. (4) And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? (5) For whether is easier, to say, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? (6) But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. (7) And he arose, and departed to his house.

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Mark use the popular term "paralytic;" St. Luke, with perhaps more technical precision, the participle of the verb, "who was paralysed." The man was borne on a couch (St. Mark uses the Greek form of the Latin *grabatum*, the bed or mattress of the poor) carried by four bearers (Mark ii. 3). They sought to bring him through the door, but were hindered by the crowd; and then going outside the house, they got upon the roof, removed part of the roof (the light structure of Eastern houses made the work comparatively easy), let him down with ropes through the opening into the midst of the crowd, just in front of the Teacher (Mark ii. 4; Luke v. 19). This persistency implied faith in His power to heal on the part both of the sick man and the bearers.

**Son, be of good cheer.**—Better, *child.* The word implies, perhaps (as in Luke ii. 48), comparative youth, or, it may be, a fatherly tone of love and pity on the part of the speaker. Here, as elsewhere, pity is the starting-point of our Lord's work of healing, and He looked with infinite tenderness on the dejected expression of the sufferer, who had lost heart and hope.

**Thy sins be forgiven thee.**—The English is to modern ears ambiguous, and suggests the thought of a prayer or wish. The Greek is, however, either the present or the perfect passive of the indicative, "Thy sins are" or "have been forgiven thee." The words were addressed, we must believe, to the secret yearnings of the sufferer. Sickness had made him conscious of the burden of his sins, perhaps had come (as such forms of nervous exhaustion often do come) as the direct consequence of his sin. The Healer saw that the disease of the soul must first be removed, and that then would come the time for restoring strength to the body.

(3) **This man blasphemeth.**—The words were but an echo of the charge that had been brought at Jerusalem, that "He made Himself equal with God" (John v. 18), and may well have come from some of the same objectors. St. Mark and St. Luke give the grounds of their accusation: "What is this that this Man thus speaks? Who can forgive sins but One, that is, God?" Speaking abstractedly, they were affirming one of the first principles of all true religious belief. All sins are offences against God, and therefore, though men may forgive trespasses as far as they themselves are concerned, the ultimate act of forgiveness belongs to God only; and for a mere man, as such, to claim the right of forgiving thus absolutely, was to claim a divine attribute, and therefore to blaspheme—*i.e.*, to utter words as disparaging as open profaneness to the majesty of God. What they forgot to take into account was the possibility (1) that God might so far delegate His power to His chosen servants that they, on sufficient evidence of that delegation, might rightly declare sins to be forgiven; or (2) that the Teacher might Himself be one with God, and so share in His perfections and prerogatives. On either of these suppositions the charge of blasphemy was fully answered, and the sin of the scribes lay in their ignoring the fact that He had given sufficient proof of the former, if not of the latter also.

(4) **Knowing their thoughts.**—The better MSS. give "seeing," as with an immediate act of intuition. St. Mark adds his usual "immediately," and both he and St. Luke use the word which implies fulness of knowledge.

**Wherefore think ye evil?**—Literally, *evil things.* The thoughts were evil because, in face of the mighty works and the divine wisdom of the Teacher, they were assuming that He had wantonly spoken words that involved the most extreme of all forms of sin against the God in whose name He taught.

(5) **Whether is easier, . . . ?**—The form of the question implies what we call an argument *à fortiori.* It was easier to say, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," for those words could not be put to any outward test, and only the consciousness of the sinner could attest their power. It was a bolder and a harder thing to risk the utterance of words which challenged an immediate and visible fulfilment; and yet He was content to utter such words, without fear of the result. Measured in their true relation to each other, the spiritual wonder was, of course, the greater; but here, as so often elsewhere, He puts Himself, as it were, on the level of those who hear Him, and vouchsafes to speak to them according to their thoughts.

(6) **That ye may know that the Son of man hath power.**—Better, *authority*, as in John v. 27. The two passages are so closely parallel that we can hardly be wrong in thinking that the words now spoken were meant to recall those which some, at least, of those who listened had heard before. This view, at any rate, brings out the fulness of their meaning. As they stand here, they seem to include both the two hypotheses mentioned in the Note on verse 3. The Father had given Him authority to "forgive sins" and to "execute judgment" because He was the Son of Man, the representative of mankind, and as such was exercising a delegated power. But then, that discourse in John v. showed that He also spoke of Himself as the Son of God as well as the Son of Man (John v. 25), and as such claimed an honour equal to that which was rightly paid to the Father (John v. 23). Ultimately, therefore, our Lord's answer rests on the higher, and not the lower, of the two grounds on which the objectors might have been met.

**Arise, take up thy bed.**—As St. Mark gives the words we have the very syllables that had been spoken to the "impotent man" at Bethesda (John v. 8), and in any case words identical in meaning; and the natural inference is that our Lord meant to recall what the scribes from Jerusalem had then seen and heard.

(7) **He arose, and departed to his house.**—St. Mark adds his usual "immediately"; St. Luke, that he went "glorifying God." We can picture to ourselves the exultant joy of the soul freed from the

(8) But when the multitudes saw *it*, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.

(9) And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom:[a] and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.

(10) And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. (11) And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? (12) But when Jesus heard *that*, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. (13) But go ye and learn what *that* meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice:[b] for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.[c]

[a] Mark 2. 14; Luke 5. 27.

[b] Hos. 6. 6; ch. 12. 7.

[c] 1 Tim. 1. 15.

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burden of its sins, and rejoicing in the new vitality of the body.

(8) **They marvelled.**—The better reading, adopted by most editors, gives *they were afraid.* This agrees better with St. Mark's "they were amazed, and glorified God," and St. Luke's "they were filled with fear." St. Mark gives the words they uttered, "We never saw it after this fashion;" St. Luke, "We saw strange things to-day."

**Which had given such power unto men.**—It was natural that this should be the impression made on the great body of the hearers. They rested in the thought of a delegated authority, a "power given to men," as such, without passing on to the deeper truth of the union of the manhood with God.

(9) **As Jesus passed forth from thence.**—All three Gospels agree, as has been noticed, in the sequence of the two events. And the sequence was probably, in part at least, one of cause and effect. The sympathy and power shown in healing the paralytic impressed itself on the mind of one who, as a publican, felt that he too had sins that needed to be forgiven.

**A man, named Matthew.**—St. Mark and St. Luke give the name as Levi, the former adds that he was the "son of Alphæus." The difference may be explained by assuming that in his case, as in that of "Simon who is called (or named) Peter" (Matt. x. 2), a new name was given that practically superseded the old. The meaning of Matthew—which, like Theodore, Dorotheus, and the like, means "the gift of God," or, more strictly, "the gift of Jehovah"—makes a change of this kind in itself probable. If he were the son of Alphæus, he would be (assuming identity of person and of name) the brother of the James whose name appears with his own in the second group of four in the lists of the Twelve Apostles.

**Sitting at the receipt of custom.**—Literally, *at the custom-house,* the *douane* of the lake. The customs levied there were probably of the nature of an *octroi* on the fish, fruit, and other produce that made up the exports and imports of Capernaum.

**And he saith unto him, Follow me.**—St. Mark (ii. 13) makes the call follow close upon an unrecorded discourse addressed to the whole multitude of Capernaum. In the nature of the case it was probable that there had been, as in the analogous call of the sons of Jona and Zebedee, a preparation of some kind. A brother had been converted, his own heart had been touched, he had felt (see Note on iv. 13) the presence of the new Teacher as light in the shadow of death.

**He arose, and followed him.**—St. Luke adds, "he left all." There was not much to leave—his desk at the custom, his stipend or his percentage; but it was his all, and no man can leave more than that.

(10) **As Jesus sat at meat in the house.**—The Greek runs, *as he sat at meat.* The insertion of the name Jesus in this part of the sentence injures the sense. What seems to have been meant is, that while Matthew sat (*i.e.*, reclined after Roman fashion), many publicans and sinners came and reclined with Jesus and His disciples. On the assumption of St. Matthew's authorship of the Gospel, there is a noticeable humility in his omission of the fact that he had made "a great feast" (Luke v. 29). It was apparently a farewell feast to old friends and neighbours before he entered on his new calling. They were naturally mostly of his own class, or on a yet lower level. The publican was the pariah of Palestine, and no decent person would associate with him. The term "sinners" may have included Gentiles, but does not necessarily designate them. So far as the context goes, as in verse 13, the term is used in its simple and natural sense.

(11) **When the Pharisees saw it.**—"Scribes of the Pharisees" (Mark ii. 16). These were probably those who had been present at the healing of the paralytic, the scribes who had come from Jerusalem. They, of course, would not enter the publican's house, but they stood outside and watched the mingled guests with wonder, and asked their two-fold question, "Why do *ye* eat and drink . . . (Luke v. 30)?" "Why doth *your Master* . . . ?"

(12) **They that be whole.**—Literally, *They that are strong.* St. Luke gives, with a more professional precision, "They that are in health." That, speaking from the thoughts and standpoint of those addressed (which in another than our Lord we might term grave irony), which enters so largely into our Lord's teaching, appears here in its most transparent form. Those of whom He speaks were, we know, suffering from the worst form of spiritual disease, but in their own estimation they were without spot or taint, and as such, therefore, He speaks to them. On their own showing, they ought not to object to His carrying on that work where there was most need of it. The proverb cited by Him in Luke iv. 23 shows that it was not the first time that He had referred to His own work as that of the Great Physician.

(13) **Go ye and learn.**—The words of Hos. vi. 6—cited once again by our Lord in reference to the Sabbath (Matt. xii. 7)—asserted the superiority of ethical to ceremonial law. To have withdrawn from contact with sinners would have been a formal "sacrifice," such as Pharisees delighted to offer, and from which they took their very name; but the claims of "mercy" were higher, and bade Him mingle with them. It was the very purpose of His coming, not to call "righteous men" (again with studied reference to their own estimate of themselves), but "sinners," and to call them, not to continue as they were, but, as St. Luke adds (the words are wanting in the best MSS. here

(14) Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?[a] (15) And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast. (16) No man putteth a piece of new cloth[1] unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and

[a] Mark 2. 18; Luke 5. 33.

[1] Or, *raw*, or, *unwrought cloth.*

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and also in St. Mark), "to repentance." We may, perhaps, infer further, that when the scribes were told to consider what the prophet's words meant, there was also some reference to the context of those words. They would find their own likeness in the words, "Your goodness is as a morning cloud; . . . they . . . have transgressed the covenant; there have they dealt treacherously against me" (Hos. vi. 4, 7).

(14) **The disciples of John.** – The passage is interesting as showing (1) that the followers of the Baptist continued during our Lord's ministry to form a separate body (as in Matt. xi. 2; xiv. 12); and (2) that they obeyed rules which he had given them, more or less after the pattern of those of the Pharisees. They had their own days of fasting (the context makes it probable that the feast in Matthew's house was held on one of them), their own forms of prayer (Luke xi. 1). They, it would seem, acting with the Pharisees, and perhaps influenced by them, were perplexed at conduct so unlike that of the master they revered, and came therefore with their question. But they were, at least, not hypocrites, and they are answered therefore without the sternness which had marked the reply to their companions.

(15) **Can the children of the bridechamber mourn?**—The words were full of meaning in themselves, but they only gain their full significance when we connect them with the teaching of the Baptist recorded in John iii. 29. He had pointed to Jesus as "the Bridegroom." He had taught them that the coming of that Bridegroom was the fulfilling of his joy. Would he have withdrawn from the outward expression of that joy?

**The children of the bridechamber**—*i.e.*, the guests invited to the wedding. The words implied, startling as that thought would be to them, that the feast in Matthew's house was, in fact, a wedding-feast. His disciples were at once the guests of that feast individually; and collectively they were the new Israel, the new congregation or *Ecclesia*, which was, as our Lord taught in parable (Matt. xxii. 2), and St. Paul directly (Eph. v. 25—27), and St. John in apocalyptic vision (Rev. xix. 7; xxi. 2), the bride whom He had come to make His own, to cleanse, and to purify.

**The days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them.**—Noteworthy as the first recorded intimation in our Lord's public teaching (that in John iii. 14 was less clear until interpreted by the event, and was addressed to Nicodemus, and perhaps to him only, or, at the furthest, to St. John) of His coming death. The joy of the wedding-feast would cease, and then would come the long night of expectation, till once again there should be the cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh" (Matt. xxv. 6).

**Then shall they fast.**—The words can hardly be looked on as a command imposing fasting as a formal obligation, but, beyond all doubt, they sanction the principle on which fasting rests. The time that was to follow the departure of the Bridegroom would be one of sorrow, conflict, discipline, and at such a time the self-conquest implied in abstinence was the natural and true expression of the feelings that belonged to it. So the Christian Church has always felt; so it was, as the New Testament records, in the lives of at least two great apostles, St. Peter (Acts x. 10) and St. Paul (2 Cor. xi. 27). So far as it goes, however, the principle here asserted is in favour of fasts at special seasons of sorrow, rather than of frequent and fixed fasts as a discipline, or meritorious act. In fixing her days of fasting, the Church of England, partly guided perhaps by earlier usage, has at least connected them with the seasons and days that call specially to meditation on the sterner, sadder side of truth.

(16) **No man putteth a piece of new cloth.**—There is a closer connection between the three similitudes than at first sight appears. The wedding-feast suggested the idea of the wedding-garment, and of the wine which belonged to its joy. We may even go a step further, and believe that the very dress of those who sat at meat in Matthew's house, coming as they did from the lower and less decently-habited classes, made the illustration all the more palpable and vivid. How could those worn garments be made meet for wedding-guests? Would it be enough to sew on a patch of new cloth where the old was wearing into holes? Not so He answers here; not so He answers again when He implicitly makes the king who gives the feast the giver also of the garment (Matt. xxii. 2).

**New cloth**—*i.e.*, cloth that has not passed through the fuller's hands—new and undressed, in its freshest and strongest state. Such a patch sewn upon a weak part of the old cloak would, on the first strain, tear the cloth near it.

**The rent is made worse.**—Better, *there comes a worse rent.* St. Luke adds another reason, "the piece put in agrees not with the old."

The meaning of the parable in its direct application lies very near the surface. The "garment" is that which is outward, the life and conversation of the man, which show his character. The old garment is the common life of sinful men, such as Matthew and his guests; the new garment is the life of holiness, the religious life in its completeness; fasting, as one element of that life, is the patch of new cloth which agrees not with the old, and leads to a greater evil, a "worse rent" in the life than before. No one would so deal with the literal garment. Yet this was what the Pharisees and the disciples of John were wishing to do with the half-converted publicans. This, we may add, is what the Church of Christ has too often done in her work as the converter of the nations. Sacramental ordinances, or monastic vows, or Puritan formulæ, or Quaker conventionalities, have been engrafted on lives that were radically barbarous, or heathen, or worldly, and the contrast has been glaring, and the "rent" made worse. The more excellent way, which our Lord pursued, and which it is our wisdom to pursue, is to take the old garment, and to transform it, as by a renewing power from within, thread by thread, till old things are passed away, and all things are become new.

the rent is made worse. (17) Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

(18) While he spake these things unto them,[a] behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. (19) And Jesus arose, and followed him, and *so did* his disciples.

(20) And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind *him*, and touched the hem of his garment: (21) for she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. (22) But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee

[a] Mark 5. 22; Luke 8. 41.

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(17) **Neither do men put new wine into old bottles.**—The bottles are those made of hides partly tanned, and retaining, to a great extent, the form of the living animals. These, as they grew dry with age, became very liable to crack, and were unable to resist the pressure of the fermenting liquor. If the mistake were made, the bottles were marred, and the wine spilt. When we interpret the parable, we see at once that the "new wine" represents the inner, as the garment did the outer, aspect of Christian life, the new energies and gifts of the Spirit, which, as on the day of Pentecost, were likened to new wine (Acts ii. 13). In dealing with men, our Lord did not bestow these gifts suddenly, even on His own disciples, any more than He imposed rules of life for which men were not ready. As the action of organised churches has too often reproduced the mistake of sewing the patch of new cloth on the old garment, so in the action of enthusiastic or mystic sects, in the history of Montanism, Quakerism in its earlier stages, the growth of the so-called Catholic and Apostolic Church, which had its origin in the history of Edward Irving, we have that of pouring new wine into old bottles. The teaching of our Lord points in both instances to gradual training, speaking the truth as men are able to bear it; reserving many truths because they "cannot bear them now."

St. Luke adds, as before, a new aspect of the illustration: "No man having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better." See Note on Luke v. 39.

(18) **While he spake these things.**—The sequence seems so clear as, at first, hardly to admit of doubt; and yet it is no less clear that St. Mark and St. Luke represent what is told as following close upon our Lord's return to the western side of the lake after the healing of the Gadarene, and place many events between it and the call of Levi. Assuming St. Matthew's own connection with the Gospel, we may justly, in this case, give greater weight to his order than to the arrangement of the other two, who derived the account from others.

**A certain ruler.**—St. Mark and St. Luke give the name Jairus, and state that he was "a ruler of the synagogue," probably an elder, or one of the *Parnasim* or "pastors." The fact is interesting as suggesting a coincidence between this narrative and that of the centurion's servant. As a ruler of the synagogue, Jairus would probably have been among the elders of the Jews who came as a deputation to our Lord, and would thus have been impressed with His power to heal in cases which seemed hopeless.

**My daughter is even now dead.**—St. Luke adds, as one who had inquired into details, that she was the ruler's only child, was twelve years old, and that she "lay a-dying," agreeing with St. Mark's "is at the point of death," literally, *in extremis*, "at the last gasp;" and both add that the crowd that followed "thronged" and "pressed" our Lord as He went.

(20) **Behold, a woman . . .**—The "issue of blood" was probably of the kind that brought with it ceremonial uncleanness (Lev. xv. 26), and this accounts for the sense of shame which made her shrink from applying to the Healer openly, and from confessing afterwards what she had done. It is significant that the period of her sufferings coincided with the age of the ruler's daughter. His sorrow was sudden after twelve years of joyful hope; hers had brought with it, through twelve long years, the sickness of hope deferred. St. Mark and St. Luke add (though in the latter some MSS. omit the words) that she "had spent all her substance on physicians, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse;" and the former states (what is, of course, obvious) that she came because she had "heard of the things concerning Jesus."

**Touched the hem of his garment.**—The incidental notice is interesting as making up, together with Matt. xiv. 36, John xix. 23, all that we know as to our Lord's outward garb. There was first, nearest the body, the coat or tunic (χίτων) without seam, woven from the top throughout; then, over that, the garment or cloak (ἱμάτιον), flowing loosely after the manner of the East; and this had its "border or fringe," probably of a bright blue mingled with white, that on which the scribes and Pharisees laid stress as being in accordance with the Law (Num. xv. 38), and which they wore, therefore, of an ostentatious width (Matt. xxiii. 5). Later tradition defined the very number of the threads or tassels of the fringe, so that they might represent the 613 precepts of the Law.

(21) **She said within herself.**—The words indicate a faith real but not strong. She believed, as the leper did, in the power to heal, but did not trust the love, and shrank from the thought lest the Healer should shrink from her. And she thought not of a will that seeks to bless and save, but of a physical effluence passing from the body to the garments, and from the garments to the hand that touched them. Yet weak as the faith was, it was accepted, and outward things were endowed with a "virtue" which was not their own. So afterwards, where a like belief prevailed, the "handkerchiefs and aprons" that were brought from St. Paul's flesh became means of healing (Acts xix. 12).

(22) **Be of good comfort.**—The same word of tenderness is spoken to her as had been spoken to the paralytic. What each needed, she the most of the two, was the courage, the enthusiasm of faith.

**Thy faith hath made thee whole.**—Literally, *thy faith hath saved thee.* The rendering of the Authorised version is not wrong, and yet it represents but part of the full meaning of the word. Her faith had whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.

(23) And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise, (24) he said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. (25) But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose. (26) And the fame[1] hereof went abroad into all that land.

(27) And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, *Thou* son of David, have mercy on us. (28) And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. (29) Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. (30) And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See

[1] Or, *this fame.*

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saved her, in the higher as well as in the lower sense. The teaching of the narrative lies almost on the surface. There may be imperfect knowledge, false shame, imperfect trust, and yet if the germ of faith be there, Christ, the Healer both of the souls and bodies of men, recognises even the germ, and answers the longing desire of the soul to be freed from its uncleanness. Other healers may have been sought in vain, but it finds its way through the crowd that seems to hinder its approach, and the "virtue" which it seeks goes forth even from the "hem of the garment," even through outward ordinances (for thus we interpret the miracle, which is also a parable), which in themselves have no healing power. Eusebius, in his *Church History* (vii. 13), states that the woman belonged to Cæsarea Philippi, and that, in thankfulness for her cure, she set up two statues in bronze—one of herself in the attitude of supplication, and the other of our Lord standing erect and stretching forth His hand to her—and that these were shown in his own day, in the early part of the fourth century. In the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus (v. 26) she is called Veronica.

The other Gospels relate more fully that the issue of blood ceased; that "she felt in her body that she was healed of her plague;" that Jesus perceived that "virtue had gone out of Him," and asked the question, "Who is it that touched Me?" that the disciples answered—Peter as usual foremost (Luke viii. 45)—"The multitude throng Thee and press Thee, and askest Thou, Who touched Me?" that our Lord then give His reason for the question. He had felt a touch, the touch of faith and unspoken prayer, which was very different from the pressure of the eager, curious crowd.

(23–26) The other Gospels fill up the gap. While our Lord was speaking the words of promise to the woman, messengers came from the house of Jairus, reporting that the child was dead. They whisper to him, using the self-same words as had been used by the friends of the centurion, "Why *troublest* thou the Teacher any further?" And Jesus turns, and speaks words of comfort to the father's heart: "Be not afraid, only believe." They come to the house, and He suffers none to enter but the father and mother, and Peter, James, and John, who now, for the first time, are chosen from among the chosen, for the special blessedness of being with Him in the greater and more solemn moments of His ministry; and as they enter, the preparations for the funeral—always following in the East a few hours after death—are already begun. Minstrels are there, with a crowd of real or hired mourners, raising their wailing cries. And then, in the calmness of conscious power, He bids them withdraw, "for the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth." To Him the death, though real, was yet but as a sleep, for He, as afterwards in the case of Lazarus (John xi. 11), had come to awaken her even out of that sleep. And then, with the heartlessness and unbelief natural to hireling mourners, they "laughed Him to scorn." They were too familiar with many forms of death to be mistaken as to its outward signs. And then He entered, with the five, as before, into the chamber of death, where the body was laid out for the burial, and grasped her hands, and uttered the words, of which St. Mark gives the Aramaic form, *Talitha cumi*, "Damsel, I say to thee, Arise," and "immediately she arose, and walked." St. Luke, again with a touch of medical precision, reports the fact in the form, "her spirit," or "her breath, returned," and, with St. Mark, records that our Lord commanded that "something should be given her to eat." The restored life was dependent, after the supernatural work had been completed, upon natural laws, and there was the risk of renewed exhaustion. As in other cases, He charged the parents that they should not make it known. It was not good for the spiritual or the bodily life of the girl that she should be the object of the visits of an idle curiosity; and yet, in spite of the command, the fame of the act spread abroad through all that country.

(27) **Two blind men.**—The two narratives that follow are peculiar to St. Matthew. The title by which the blind address our Lord as "the Son of David," was that which expressed the popular belief that He was the expected Christ. It is used afterwards by the woman of Canaan (Matt. xv. 22), and again by the blind at Jericho (Matt. xx. 30, 31; Mark x. 47; Luke xviii. 38, 39).

(28) **Into the house.**—The article indicates the house in which He sojourned at Capernaum, probably that of St. Peter.

**Believe ye that I am able to do this?**—The cry, "Have mercy on us," had implied the request that He would restore their sight. In this case, as in others, faith was the antecedent condition of the miracle.

(29) **Then touched he their eyes.**—This is the first recorded instance of the method which our Lord seems always to have adopted in the case of the blind, and, in part also, in that of the deaf. Others might have their faith strengthened by the look of sympathy and conscious power which they saw in the face of the Healer. From that influence they were shut out, and for them therefore its absence was supplied by acts which they would naturally connect with the purpose to heal them. (Comp. the later instances in Matt. xx. 34; John ix. 6.)

(30) **Straitly charged them.**—The word, implying originally the panting breath of vehement emotion, is

*that* no man know *it.* (31) But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country.

(32) As they went out,[a] behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil. (33) And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel. (34) But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.[b] (35) And Jesus went about all the cities and villages,[c] teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

(36) But when he saw the multitudes,[d] he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted,[1] and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.[e] (37) Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly *is* plenteous,[f] but the

[c] Mark 6. 6; Luke 13. 22.

[a] Luke 11. 14.

[d] Mark 6. 34.

[1] Or, *were tired and lay down.*

[e] Num. 27. 17.

[f] Luke 10. 2.

[b] ch. 12. 24; Mark 3. 22; Luke 11. 15.

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one of the strongest used by the New Testament writers (Mark i. 43; xiv. 5; John xi. 33, 38) to express repugnance, displeasure, or the command that implies annoyance. It is as if our Lord saw the garrulous joy on the point of uttering itself, and sought by every means in His power to restrain it. The reasons may be sought, as elsewhere, either (1) in its being good for the spiritual life of the men themselves that they should show forth their praise of God, not with their lips, but in their lives; or (2) in the shrinking from mere notoriety, from the gaze of crowds drawn together to gaze on signs and wonders, and ready to make the Wonder-Worker a king because He wrought them, which St. Matthew, at a later stage, notes as characteristic of our Lord's ministry (xii. 16—21).

(31) **They . . . . spread abroad his fame.**—As in other cases, so in this, the command was not obeyed. The question has been raised, whether the zeal which thus showed itself was or not praiseworthy; and, curiously enough, has been answered by most patristic and Roman Catholic commentators in the affirmative, some even maintaining that the command was not meant seriously; and by most Protestant commentators in the negative. There can be no doubt that the latter take that which is ethically the truer view. "To obey is better than sacrifice," better even than unrestrained emotion, better certainly than garrulous excitement.

(32) **A dumb man possessed with a devil.**—This narrative also is given by St. Matthew only. Referring to the Note in the *Excursus* on viii. 28 for the general question as to "possession," it may be noted here that the phenomena presented in this case were those of catalepsy, or of insanity showing itself in obstinate and sullen silence. The dumbness was a spiritual disease, not the result of congenital malformation. The work of healing restored the man to sanity rather than removed a bodily imperfection. Comp. the analogous phenomena in Matt. xii. 22, Luke xi. 14. The latter agrees so closely with this that but for the fact of St. Matthew's connecting our Lord's answer to the accusation of the Pharisees with the second of these miracles, we might have supposed the two identical.

(33) The verse is obviously intended to stand in contrast with that which follows. The "multitude" gave free expression to their natural wonder, which, though it did not actually amount to faith, was yet one step towards it. The Pharisees stood aloof, not denying the facts, but having their own solution of them.

(34) **Through the prince of the devils.**—In xii. 24—30 the charge reappears, with the addition of the name of "Beelzebub," as the prince of the devils; and, together with our Lord's answer to it, will be better discussed in the Notes on those verses. Here it will be enough to note the coincidence with x. 25, which shows that the accusation had been brought before the mission of the Twelve, related in the following chapter.

(35) **And Jesus went about.**—The verse is all but identical with iv. 23, and may be described as recording our Lord's second mission-circuit in Galilee, in which He was accompanied probably by His disciples, whom, however, He had not as yet invested with a delegated authority as His "apostles," or representatives. It is manifestly the beginning of the section which contains the great discourse of chap. x., and was intended to lead up to it.

**Every sickness and every disease**—*i.e.,* every variety or type, rather than every individual case. The work of healing was, we must believe, dependent, as before, on the faith of those who came seeking to be healed. Of the two words, the former is in the Greek the stronger, and, though the relative significance of the English words is not sharply defined, it would, perhaps, be better to invert the renderings

(36) **He was moved with compassion.**—The words that follow are so vivid and emphatic that we may well believe them to have had their starting-point in our Lord's own expression of His feelings. We find Him using the identical words in xv. 32, and Mark viii. 2: "I have compassion on the multitude."

**They fainted.**—The English represents the received printed text of the Greek Testament at the beginning of the seventeenth century. There is, however, an immense preponderance of authority in favour of another reading, which gives the passive participle of the verb translated "trouble" in Mark v. 35, Luke vii. 6, and meaning literally "flayed," and thence figuratively "tormented, worried, vexed." They were not merely as sheep that have grown weary and faint, hungry, looking up and yet not fed, but were as those that have been harassed by the wolf—the prey of thieves and robbers. (Comp. John x. 8—12.)

(37) **Then saith he unto his disciples.**—Nowhere in the whole Gospel record is there a more vivid or more touching instance of the reality of our Lord's human emotions. It is not enough for Him to feel compassion Himself. He craves the sympathy of His companions and disciples, and needs even their fellowship in prayer. A great want lies before Him, and He sees that they are the right agents to meet it, if only they will pray to be made so; or, to put the case more clearly, if only they will pray that the work *may be done,* whether they themselves are or are not the doers of it.

**The harvest truly is plenteous.**—This is the first occurrence in the record of the first three Gospels of the figure which was afterwards to be expanded in the two parables of the Sower and the Tares, and to labourers *are* few; (38) pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

CHAPTER X.—(1) And when he had called unto *him* his twelve disciples,[a] he gave them power *against*[1] unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. (2) Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother;

[1] Or, over.

A.D. 31.

[a] Mark 3. 14; Luke 9. 1.

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reappear in the visions of the Apocalypse (Rev. xiv. 14—19). We find, however, from the Gospel of St. John—which here, as so often elsewhere, supplies missing links and the germs of thoughts afterwards developed—that it was not a new similitude in our Lord's teaching. Once before, among the alien Samaritans, He had seen the fields white as for the spiritual harvest of the souls of men, and had spoken of him that soweth and him that reapeth (John iv. 35, 36).

(38) **The Lord of the harvest**—*i.e.*, the Father who had sent Him to be the Sower of the divine seed, and who, through Him, was about to send forth the labourers.

## X.

(1) What is described here is not the choice, but the mission of the Twelve. That selection had been made before (Luke vi. 13), and the number at once suggested the thought that they represented the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. xix. 28), and were as such to be His messengers to the whole people of the dispersion. The name Apostle (which He had given them before—Luke vi. 13) signified literally "one who is sent;" but it had acquired in classical Greek a more specific meaning, as the "ambassador," or "envoy," of a state. According to our Lord's teaching they were sent by Him, even as He had been sent by the Father (John xx. 21).

**All manner of sickness.**—See Note on ix. 35. The repetition of the same words emphasises the delegation of authority.

(2) A comparison of the four lists of the Apostles (Matt. x. 2—4, Mark iii. 16—19, Luke vi. 13—16, Acts i. 13) brings out some interesting facts. (1.) The name of Peter is always first, that of Judas always last. In the former case we recognise acknowledged preeminence. The position of the latter may have been the consequence of the infamy which attached to the name of the traitor; but it is possible (and this may have been one of the elements that entered into his guilt) that his place had always been one of inferiority.

(2.) All the lists divide themselves into three groups of four, the persons in each group being always the same (assuming that the three names, Judas the *brother* (?) of James, Thaddæus, and Lebbæus, belong to the same person), though the order in each group varies.

(3.) The first group includes the two sons of Jona and the two sons of Zebedee, whose twofold call is related in Matt. iv. 18—21, John i. 40. In two lists (Mark and Acts) the name of Andrew stands last; in two (Matt. and Luke) that of John. In none of them are the names of Peter and John coupled together, as might have been expected from their close companionship (John xx. 2; Acts iii. 1). The four obviously occupied the innermost place in the company of the Twelve, and were chosen out of the chosen. The three, Peter, James, and John, were the only witnesses of the healing of Jairus's daughter (Mark v. 37), of the Transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 1), and of the Agony in Gethsemane (Matt. xxvi. 37). Something seems to have excluded Andrew, though he had been the first called of all (John i. 40), from this intimate companionship; but we find him joined with the other three as called to listen to the great prophetic discourse on the Mount of Olives (Mark xiii. 3). All the four appear to have come from Bethsaida, on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee.

(4.) The name of Philip is always first in the second group, and he, too, came from Bethsaida. Next, in the three Gospel lists, comes that of Bartholomew. The name, like Barjona and Bartimæus, was obviously a patronymic, and it was at least probable that he had some other name. The absence of any mention of Bartholomew in St. John's Gospel, or of Nathanael (John i. 45) in the other three, has led most modern commentators to the conclusion that they were two names for the same person; and the juxtaposition of the two names in their lists agrees with the fact that it was Philip who brought him to know Jesus as the Christ (John i. 45). On this assumption, Bartholomew was of Cana, the scene of our Lord's first miracle (John xxi. 2). The name of Matthew stands before that of Thomas in Mark and Luke, after it in the Gospel which bears his own name. On the change of name from Levi, and his description as the son of Alphæus, see Notes on ix. 9. As the name of Thomas, or Didymus, means "twin," there seems some ground for believing, from the way in which the two names are grouped together, that here too we have another pair of brothers called to the service of their Master. Eusebius (*H. E.* i. 13), in his account of the conversion of Abgarus of Edessa, speaks of this Apostle as "Judas who is also Thomas," and this suggests the reason why the cognomen of "the Twin" prevailed over the name which was already borne by two out of the company of the Twelve.

(5.) The third group always begins with "James the son of Alphæus;" and this description suggests some interesting inferences:—(1.) That he too was a brother of Matthew (there are no grounds for assuming two persons of the name of Alphæus), and probably, therefore, of Thomas also. (2.) That if the Clopas (not Cleopas) of John xix. 25, was, as is generally believed, only the less Græcised form of the name Alphæus, then his mother Mary may have been the sister of Mary the mother of the Lord (see Notes on John xix. 25). (3.) This Mary, in her turn, is identified, on comparing John xix. 25 with Mark xv. 40, with the mother of James the Less (literally, *the Little*) and of Joses. The term probably pointed, not to subordinate position, but, as in the case of Zacchæus, to short stature, and appears to have been an epithet (Luke xix. 3) distinguishing him from the James of the first list. The Greek form in both cases was Jacôbus—the Jacob of the Old Testament—which has passed, like Joannes, through many changes, till it appears in its present clipped and curtailed shape. (4.) On the assumption that the James and Joses of Mark xv. 40 are two of the "brethren of the Lord" of Matt. xiii. 55, this James *might*, perhaps, be identified with the James "the brother of the Lord" of Gal. i. 19 and Acts xv. 13, the writer of the Epistle. The balance of evidence is, however, decidedly against this view. (Comp. Note on Matt. xiii. 55.) The next name appears in three different forms:

James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother; (3) Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James *the son* of Alphæus, and Lebbæus, whose surname was Thaddæus; (4) Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him. (5) These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not: (6) but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.[a] (7) And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.[b] (8) Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. (9) Provide[1] neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your

[a] Acts 13. 46.

[b] Luke 10. 9.

[1] Or, *Get.*

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Judas the *brother* of James (it must be noted, however, that the collocation of the two names is that which is elsewhere rendered "the son of . . ," and that the insertion of the word "brother" is an inference from Jude, verse 1) in Luke and Acts; Lebbæus in Matthew (with the addition, in later MSS. and the *textus receptus*, of "who is also surnamed Thaddæus"); Thaddæus in Mark; St. John names him simply as "Judas, not Iscariot" (xiv. 22). The explanation of the variations is natural enough. One who bore the name of Judas wanted something to distinguish him. This might be found either in the term which expressed his relation as son or brother to James the son of Alphæus, or in a personal epithet. Lebbæus suggests a derivation from the Hebrew *leb* (heart), and points to warmth and earnestness of character; *thad*, in later Hebrew, meant the female breast, and may have been the origin of Thaddæus, as indicating, even more than the other sobriquet, a feminine devotedness. Taking the three names together, they suggest the thought that he was one of the youngest of the Twelve, and was looked upon by the others with an affection which showed itself in the name thus given to him. Simon, too, needed a distinguishing epithet, and it was found in the two forms of Zelotes and Cananite (not Canaanite). The former may point to zeal as his chief characteristic, but it was more probably used in the sense in which the followers of Judas of Galilee bore the name, and under which they were prominent in the later struggle with the Romans, as in a special sense "zealots for the law" (Jos. *Wars*, iv. 3, § 9). (Comp. a like use of the word in Acts xxi. 20.) On this assumption we get a glimpse, full of interest, into the earlier life of the Apostle so named. The other term, Cananite—which is not a local term, but connected with a Hebrew verb, *kanà*, to be hot, to glow, to be zealous—expresses the same idea. Lastly, we have "Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him," described by St. John as the "son of Simon" (vi. 71; xii. 4; xiii. 2, 26), the term "Iscariot" being applied in the first and last of these passages to the father. These facts seem to leave little doubt that the name is local, and is the Græcised form of *Ish-Kerioth* (a man of Kerioth), a town in Judah mentioned in the list of Josh. xv. 25. Assuming this inference, we have in him the only one among the Twelve of whom it is probable that he was of Judah, and not of Galilee. This also may not have been without its influence on his character, separating him, as it might well tend to do, from the devoted loyalty of the others.

(5) **Go not into the way of the Gentiles.**—The emphatic limitation seems at first sight at variance with the language which had spoken of those who should come from east and west to sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God, and with the fact that our Lord had already taken His disciples into a city of Samaria, and told them that there also there were fields white for the harvest (John iv. 35). We must remember, however, (1) that the limitation was confined to the mission on which they were now sent; (2) that it did but recognise a divine order, the priority of Israel in God's dealing with mankind, "to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile;" and (3) that the disciples themselves were as yet unfitted to enter on a work which required wider thoughts and hopes than they had yet attained. It was necessary that they should learn to share their Master's pity for the lost sheep of the house of Israel before they could enter into His yearnings after the sheep that were "not of this fold" (John x. 16).

(7) **Preach**—*i.e.*, "proclaim—act as heralds," as elsewhere. The repetition of the self-same words as had described first the Baptist's teaching and then our Lord's, seems to suggest that this was actually a formula of proclamation. The two envoys of the King were to enter into town or village, and there, standing in the gate, to announce that His kingdom had come near, and then, when this had drawn crowds to listen, to call men to the repentance without which they could not enter it.

(8) **Raise the dead.**—The words are omitted by the best MSS., and their absence is more in accordance with the facts of the Gospel history, which records no instance of that highest form of miracle as wrought by the disciples during our Lord's ministry. That was reserved for His own immediate act. The insertion of the words was probably due to a wish to make the command cover such instances of power as that shown in the instances of Dorcas (Acts ix. 40) and Eutychus (Acts xx. 9—12).

**Freely ye have received.**—The English hardly suggests more than giving liberally. The Greek is much stronger, "Give as a free gift—give *gratis.*" They had paid Him nothing. They were not in this their first mission to require payment from others. When the kingdom had been established, the necessities of the case might require the application of the principle that "the labourer is worthy of his hire" in an organised system of stipend and the like (1 Tim. v. 18); but the principle of "giving freely" in this sense is always applicable in proportion as the work of the ministers of Christ has the character of a mission. They must proclaim the kingdom till the sense of the blessing it has brought shows itself in the thank-offerings of gratitude. The like principle of gratuitous teaching had been asserted before by some of the nobler of the Jewish Rabbis.

(9) **Neither gold, nor silver.**—"Silver" alone is named in St. Luke; brass—*i.e.*, bronze or copper coinage—in St. Mark. St. Matthew's report includes all the three forms of the money then in circulation. The tense of the word rendered "provide" requires notice. It implies that if they had money, they might take it, but they were not to "get" or "provide" it as a condition of their journey, still less to delay till they had got it.

purses,[a] (10) nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.[b] (11) And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter,[c] enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. (12) And when ye come into an house, salute it. (13) And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. (14) And whosoever shall not receive you,[d] nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.[e] (15) Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

[a] Mark 6. 8; Luke 9. 3; and 22. 35.

[d] Mark 6. 11.

[b] Luke 10. 7; 1 Tim 5. 18.

[c] Luke 10. 8.

[e] Acts 13. 51.

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**In your purses.**—Literally, *in your girdles*—the twisted folds of which were, and are, habitually used in the East instead of the "purse" of the West.

(10) **Scrip.**—The practical obsoleteness of the word in modern English makes it necessary to remind readers of the New Testament that the "scrip" or wallet was a small basket carried on the back, or by a strap hanging from one shoulder, containing the food of the traveller. So David carried in his scrip the five smooth stones from the brook (1 Sam. xvii. 40). Such a basket was looked on as the necessary equipment even of the poorest traveller, yet the apostles were to go without it. St. Mark adds, what was implied in this, "no bread."

**Neither two coats.**—Commonly, the poorer Eastern traveller carried with him the flowing plaid-like outer garment (the modern *abba*), with one "coat" or tunic next the skin, and one clean one as a change. That simplest of all the comforts of life they were in this work of theirs to dispense with.

**Neither shoes, nor yet staves.**—The apparent contradiction between these words and St. Mark's "nothing except a staff only," "be shod with sandals," is explained by what has been said above. They were to have none of the reserved comforts of common travellers, no second staff in case the first should break, no second pair of shoes in which to rest the worn and weary feet. The "sandals" were the shoes of the peasant class.

Experience (and, we may add, the Spirit that teaches by experience) has led the Christian Church at large to look on these commands as binding only during the mission on which the Twelve were actually sent. It is impossible not to admire the noble enthusiasm of poverty which showed itself in the literal adoption of such rules by the followers of Francis of Assisi, and, to some extent, by those of Wiclif; but the history of the Mendicant Orders, and other like fraternities, forms part of that teaching of history which has led men to feel that in the long-run the beggar's life will bring the beggar's vices. Yet here, as in the case of the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount, the spirit is binding still, though the letter has passed away. The mission work of the Church has ever prospered in proportion as that spirit has pervaded it.

**For the workman is worthy of his meat.**—It is a singular instance of the varied application of the same truth, that these words—which our Lord makes the ground of His command that men should make no provision for the future and commit themselves to their Father's care—are quoted by St. Paul (1 Tim. v. 18) as a plea for an organised system for the maintenance of the ministers of the Church. The same law fulfils itself in many ways—now by helping to pay the hire of the labourer, now by the full confidence that the payment may be left to God, and to the grateful hearts of men.

(11) **Enquire who in it is worthy.**—The command was a plain practical rule. The habits of Eastern hospitality would throw many houses open to the preachers which would give no openings for their work, or even bring on them an evil report. From these they were to turn away and to seek out some one who, though poor, was yet of good repute, and willing to receive them as messengers of glad tidings.

**There abide.**—The purpose of the rule was (1) to guard against fickleness, as in itself an evil; and (2) against the tendency to go from one house to another according to the advantages which were offered to the guest.

(12) **When ye come into an house.**—The English indefinite article is misleading. We must read "into *the* house," *i.e.*, the dwelling of the man who had been reported as worthy. The salutation, as the words that follow imply, was the familiar, "Peace be with thee—Peace be to this house" (Luke x. 5).

(13) **If the house be worthy.**—The doubt implied in the "if" seems at first somewhat inconsistent with the supposition that they only went into the house after having ascertained the worthiness of the occupant. It must be remembered, however, that the missionaries entered each city or village as strangers, and that in such a case even the most careful inquiry might not always be successful.

**Let your peace come upon it**—*i.e.*, the peace implied in the formula of salutation. The imperative is not so much a command addressed to them as the proclamation of an edict from the King in whose name they went. Their greeting was not to be a mere ceremonious form. It would be as a real prayer wherever the conditions of peace were fulfilled on the other side. At the worst, the prayer for peace would bring a blessing on him who prayed.

(14) **Shake off the dust of your feet.**—The act was a familiar symbol of the sense of indignation, as in the case of St. Paul (Acts xiii. 51) at Antioch in Pisidia. The Jewish maxim, that even the very dust of a heathen land brought defilement with it, added to its significance. It was a protest in act, declaring (as our Lord declares in words) that the city or house which did not receive the messengers of the Christ was below the level even of the Gentiles.

(15) **For the land of Sodom and Gomorrha.**—The thought implied in the previous verse is now expressly asserted. The cities that stood out, in the history of the world, as most conspicuous for their infamy, were yet less guilty (as sinning less against light and knowledge) than those who rejected the messengers of the King. The same comparison reappears with the addition of Tyre and Sidon in Matt. xi. 21.

**In the day of judgment.**—The phrase, like the Old Testament "day of the Lord," is wider in its range than the thoughts we commonly connect with it, and includes the earlier and more earthly judgments, as well as that which is the great consummation of them all.

(16) Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves:[a] be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless[1] as doves. (17) But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; (18) and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. (19) But when they deliver you up,[b] take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. (20) For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. (21) And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death,[c] and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against *their* parents, and cause them to be put to death. (22) And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.[d]

[a] Luke 10. 3.

[1] Or, *simple*.

[c] Luke 21. 16.

[b] Mark 13. 11; Luke 12. 11.

[d] Mark 13. 13.

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(16) **I send you forth.**—The nominative pronoun is emphatic, "It is I who send," and that not so much as an assurance of protection, but, as the words that follow show, as reminding them of their responsibility as His delegates.

**As sheep in the midst of wolves.**—Nothing can be more striking than the union of this clear foresight of conflict and suffering with the full assurance of victory and sovereignty. The position of the disciples would be as sheep surrounded by a flock of hungry and raging wolves, the wolf being here, as elsewhere in the New Testament, the symbol of the persecutor.

**Wise as serpents.**—The idea of the serpent as symbolising wisdom, seems to have entered into the early parables of most Eastern nations. We find it in Egyptian temples, in the twined serpents of the rod of Æsculapius and of Hermes, in the serpent-worship of the Turanian races, in the history in Gen. iii. of the serpent that was "more subtle than any beast of the field." For the most part it appears in Scripture as representing an evil wisdom to be fought with and overcome. Here we learn that even the serpent's sinuous craft presents something which we may well learn to reproduce. When St. Paul "caught men with guile" (2 Cor. xii. 16), becoming "all things to all men" (1 Cor. ix. 22), he was acting in the spirit of his Master's counsels.

**Harmless as doves.**—Better, *simple, sincere*—*i.e.*, "guileless." The Greek indicates more than simple harmlessness—a character in which there is no alloy of baser motives. Once again truth appears in the form of paradox. The disciples of Christ are to be at once supremely guileful and absolutely guileless. Our Lord's reference to this symbolism gains a fresh significance when we remember that He had seen the heavens opened, and the Spirit of God descending "like a dove" upon Himself (Matt. iii. 16). In and by that Spirit the two qualities that seem so contradictory are reconciled.

(17) **To the councils.**—The plural shows that our Lord referred, not to the Great Council or Sanhedrin at Jerusalem, but to the lesser councils connected with provincial synagogues that had power to judge and punish persons accused of offences against religion.

**They will scourge you in their synagogues.**—The words imply the actual infliction of the punishment within the walls of the building. To us this appears something like desecration, but there is no reason for thinking that it did so to the Jews, and St. Paul's language in Acts xxii. 19, xxvi. 11, seems to place the fact beyond the shadow of a doubt. The stripes of which the Apostle speaks in 2 Cor. xi. 24, were probably thus and there inflicted.

(18) **Ye shall be brought before governors and kings.**—The words are significant as looking forward (if we assume the unity of the discourse) to that future work among the Gentiles upon which the Twelve were told that they were not as yet to enter. "Rulers" stands always in the New Testament for the governors (proconsuls, procurators, and others) of the Roman Empire. "Kings" at least includes, even if it does not primarily indicate, the emperors themselves.

**Against them.**—Rather, *unto them.* The word is simply the dative of the person to whom we address our testimony, not involving necessarily any hostile or even reproving purpose.

(19) **Take no thought.**—In the same sense as in Matt. vi. 25, "Do not at that moment be over-anxious." The words indicate an almost tender sympathy with the feelings of Galilean disciples, "unlearned and ignorant men," standing before those who were counted so much their superiors in power and knowledge. The words that follow contain a two-fold promise: not only *what* they should say, but *how*, in what form and phrase, to say it, should be given them in that hour. The courage of Peter and John before the Sanhedrin is at once the earliest and the most striking instance of the fulfilment of the promise (Acts iv. 13).

(20) **It is not ye that speak.**—The words are strong. Human thoughts and purposes seem as if utterly suppressed, and the inspiring agency alone is recognised. It would be obviously beside the drift of our Lord's discourse to make this promise of special aid in moments of special danger the groundwork of a theory of inspiration as affecting the written records of the work of the disciples.

(21) **The brother.**—The nouns are in the Greek without the article, "brother shall deliver up brother," and are thus, perhaps, more forcible as statements of what should happen often. Our English idiom, however, allows the use of the article with nearly the same meaning. The words reproduce almost verbally the prophecy of Mic. vii. 6, and are there followed by the prophet's expression of his faith, "Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation," answering to the "endurance" of which our Lord speaks in the next verse.

(22) **Hated of all men for my name's sake.**—Here, as before, the words sketch out the history of the persecution with a precision which marks and attests the divine foreknowledge. From the days of Stephen to that of the last martyr under Diocletian it was always as a Christian and for the name of Christ that men thus suffered. Would they but renounce that, all would have gone smoothly with them. As Tertullian said of the sufferers of his day, "We are tortured when we confess our guilt, we are set free if we deny it, for the battle is about a Name" (*Apol.* c. 2). (Comp. 1 Pet. iv. 16.)

**He that endureth to the end**—*i.e.*, endures, as

(23) But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over[1] the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come. (24) The disciple is not above *his* master,[a] nor the servant above his lord. (25) It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more *shall they call* them of his household? (26) Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered,[b] that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. (27) What I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light:

[1] Or, *end*, or, *finish*.

[b] Mark 4. 22; Luke 8. 17; and 12. 2.

[a] Luke 6. 40; John 13. 16.

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the context shows, in the confession of the name of Christ as long as the trial lasts, or to the end of his own life. Such a one should receive "salvation" in its highest sense, the full participation in the blessedness of the kingdom of the Christ.

(23) **When they persecute you** The counsel is noteworthy as suggesting at least one form of the wisdom of the serpent. Men were not to imagine that they were "enduring to the end" when, in the eagerness of their zeal, they courted martyrdom; but were rather to avoid danger instead of courting it, and to utilise all opportunities for the continuance of their work. The effect of the command thus given may be traced in all the great persecutions under the Roman Empire, Polycarp and Cyprian furnishing, perhaps, the most conspicuous examples.

**Till the Son of man be come.**—The thought of another Coming than that of the days of His humiliation and of His work as a Prophet and a Healer, which had been implied before (Matt. vii. 21—23), is now explicitly unfolded. The Son of Man should come, as Daniel had seen Him come (Dan. vii. 13), in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, to complete the triumph of His kingdom. It is more difficult to understand the connection of the words with the preceding limit of time, "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel." The natural result of such a promise was to lead the disciples to look forward to that coming as certain to be within the range of their own lifetime, and was the ground of the general expectation of its nearness which, beyond all doubt, pervaded the minds of men in the Apostolic age. Explanations have been given which point to the destruction of Jerusalem as being so far "a day of the Lord" as to justify its being taken as a type of the final Advent, and they receive at least a certain measure of support from the way in which the two events are brought into close connection in the great prophetic discourse of chap. xxiv., Mark xiii., Luke xxi. But the question meets us, and cannot be evaded, Were the two events thus brought together with a knowledge of the long interval by which they were in fact to be divided from each other, and if so, why was that knowledge kept from the disciples? Some reasons for that reticence lie on the surface. That sudden widening of the horizon of their vision would have been one of the things which they were not able to bear (John xvi. 12). In this, as in all else, their training as individual men was necessarily gradual, and the education of the Church which they founded was to be carried on, like that of mankind at large, through a long succession of centuries. The whole question will call for a fuller discussion in the Notes on chap. xxiv. In the meantime it will be enough humbly to express my own personal conviction that what seems the boldest solution is also the truest and most reverential. The human thoughts of the Son of Man may not have travelled in this matter to the furthest bound of the mysterious horizon. He Himself told them of that day and that hour, that its time was known neither to the angels of heaven, nor even to the Son, but to the Father only (Mark xiii. 32).

(24) **The disciple is not above his master.**—The proverb was probably a common one, and is used by our Lord (as in Luke vi. 40; John xiii. 16; xv. 20) with more than one application. Here the thought is, "Be not amazed or cast down at these prophecies of evil days; in all your sufferings you will but be following in My footsteps; what they have said and done with Me, they will say and do with you also."

(25) **It is enough.**—Here also we note a tone of grave and tender sympathy, not without the gentle play of feeling which the words seem to betoken. To be as their Master in anything, even in shame and suffering, might well be enough for any scholar.

**Beelzebub.**—The Greek gives the form *Beel-zebul*. Its history illustrates some interesting phases of Jewish thought. (1.) It appears in the form *Baal-zebub*, the "Lord of flies" (probably as sending or averting the swarms of flies or locusts that are one of the plagues of the East), as the name of a god worshipped by the Philistines at Ekron, and consulted as an oracle (2 Kings i. 2) in cases of disease. (2.) Later Jews, identifying all heathen deities with evil spirits, saw in the god of their nearest and most hated neighbours the chief or prince of those "demons," and in their scorn transformed the name into *Baal-zebel*, which would mean "Lord of dung," or *Baal-zebul*, "Lord of the dwelling"—*i.e.*, of the house of the evil spirits who are the enemies of God. Our Lord's connection of the name with "the master of the house" seems to point to the latter meaning as that present to our Lord's thoughts. The reference is clearly made to the charge that had already been implied in Matt. ix. 34. We do not indeed find the name of Beel-zebub there, nor indeed do we meet with the direct application of that name to our Lord anywhere in the Gospel history; but there was obviously but a single step, easily taken, between the language they had actually used and that which is here reported of them.

(26) **Fear them not therefore: for . . .**—The words that bid them banish fear look backward and forward. Why should they be afraid when they were only suffering what their Master Himself had suffered, and when they could look forward to the open publicity of His triumph? In that day the veil that now conceals the truth shall be drawn away; the unknown sufferers for the truth shall receive the crown of martyrdom; the undetected cowardice that shrinks from confessing it will then be laid bare.

(27) **What I tell you in darkness.**—The words point to our Lord's method of teaching, as well as to the fact of its being esoteric, and disclosed only to the chosen few, and to them only as they were "able to bear it" (John xvi. 12). Parables, and dark sayings, and whispered hints, and many-sided proverbs, were among the forms by which He led them on to truth. They, in their work as teachers, were not to shrink through any fear of man from giving publicity to what

and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach ye upon the housetops. (28) And fear not them which kill the body,[a] but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. (29) Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?[1] and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. (30) But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.[b] (31) Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. (32) Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men,[c] him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. (33) But whosoever shall deny me before men,[d] him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. (34) Think not that I am come to send peace on earth:[e] I came not to send peace, but a sword. (35) For I am come to set a man at variance against his father,[f] and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in

[c] Luke 12. 8.

[a] Luke 12. 4.

[d] Mark 8. 38; Luke 9. 26; 2 Tim. 2. 12.

[1] *It is in value half-penny farthing in the original, as being the tenth part of the Roman penny.*

[b] 2 Sam. 14. 11; Acts 27. 34.

[e] Luke 12. 51.

[f] Mic. 7. 6.

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they had thus learnt. To "proclaim on the housetops"—the flat roofs of which were often actually used by criers and heralds for their announcements—is, of course, a natural figure for the fullest boldness and freedom in their preaching.

(28) **Are not able to kill the soul.**—Here our Lord uses what we may call the popular dichotomy of man's nature, and the word "soul" includes all that truly lives and thinks and wills in man, and is therefore equivalent to the "soul and spirit" of the more scientific trichotomy of St. Paul's Epistles (1 Thess. v. 23).

**Fear him which is able . . .**—Few words have given rise to interpretations more strangely contrasted than these. Not a few of the most devout and thoughtful commentators, unwilling to admit that our Lord ever presented the Father to men in the character of a destroyer, have urged that the meaning may be thus paraphrased: "Fear not men; but fear the Spirit of Evil, the great Adversary, who, if you yield to his temptations, has power to lead you captive at his will, to destroy alike your outward and your inward life, either in the Gehenna of torture or in that of hatred and remorse." Plausible as it seems, however, this interpretation is not, it is believed, the true one. (1) We are nowhere taught in Scripture to fear the devil, but rather to resist and defy him (Eph. vi. 11; Jas. iv. 7); and (2) it is a sufficient answer to the feeling which has prompted the other explanation to say that we are not told to think of God as in any case willing to destroy, but only as having the power to inflict that destruction where all offers of mercy and all calls to righteousness have been rejected. In addition to this, it must be remembered that St. James uses language almost identical ("There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy," Jas. iv. 12) where there cannot be a shadow of doubt as to the meaning.

(29) **Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?**—The coin mentioned here is not the same as the "farthing" of Mark xii. 42. The word there is *kodrantēs*, the *quadrans*, or fourth part, of the Roman *as*; here it is *assarion*, the diminutive of the *as*, and equal to the tenth part of the *denarius*. The fact that the *denarius* was the average day's wages of a soldier or a labourer, gives a fair approximation to its value. The homeliness of the illustration was adapted to the past experience of the apostles. It appears in a yet more homely form, in the "five sparrows sold for two farthings" of Luke xii. 6, the cheapness that thus tempted the purchaser witnessing to the small account men took of the birds so bargained for.

**Without your Father.**—The primary thought is obviously that the providence of God extends to the very meanest of His creatures. The thoughts with which we in these later days are more familiar may lead us to think of that Providence as more commonly working under the form of fixed and general laws; but, however this may be, the truth remains unaltered, for law itself is but the expression of the will of God, and faith may accept the law as working out a divine purpose of good for the universe and for every free agent who consciously accepts it.

(30) **The very hairs of your head.**—The apparent hyperbole of the figure is but the natural expression of the thought that even the incidents of life that seem most trivial are in very deed working together for good to those that love God. They are not at any moment of their lives to think that they are uncared for by their Father.

(32) **Shall confess me.**—Literally, *make his confession in and for me;* and so in the corresponding clause. The promise points forward to the great day when the Son of Man shall be enthroned in His kingdom, and then before His Father and before the angels of God (Luke xii. 8) shall acknowledge His faithful servants. The words are remarkable (1) in their calm assertion of this final sovereignty, and (2) in extending the scope of the discourse beyond the apostles themselves to all who should receive their witness.

(33) **Whosoever shall deny me.**—As with all other eternal laws, the blessing on those who fulfil the conditions to which it is attached has its counterpart of woe on those who do not fulfil them. To deny Christ on earth by word or deed, to live as if His work were nothing to us, must lead to His denying us in the last great day.

(34) **Think not that I am come to send peace.**—Truth appears again in the form of seeming paradox. Christ is "our peace" (Eph. ii. 14), and came to be the one great Peacemaker; and yet the foreseen consequences of His work involved strife and division, and such a consequence, freely accepted for the sake of the greater good that lies beyond it, involves, in fact, a purpose. The words are the natural expression of such a thought; and yet we can hardly fail to connect them with those which, in the earliest dawn of His infancy, revealed to the mother of the Christ that "a sword should pass through her own soul also" (Luke ii. 35).

(35) The words are partly, as the marginal reference shows, an echo of Mic. vii. 6, but the selection of the special relationships as typical instances suggests the thought of some personal application. Had Zebedee looked with displeasure on the calling of his two sons? or was there variance between the daughter-in-law and the mother-in-law in the household of Peter? Were the brethren of the Lord, who as yet believed not, as the foes of a man's own household?

law. (36) And a man's foes *shall be* they of his own household. (37) He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me:[a] and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. (38) And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.[b] (39) He that findeth his life shall lose it:[c] and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

(40) He that receiveth you receiveth me,[d] and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. (41) He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. (42) And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold *water* only in the name of a disciple,[e] verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

CHAPTER XI.—(1) And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities. (2) Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ,[f]

[a] Luke 14. 26.

[e] Mark 9. 41.

[b] ch. 16. 24; Mark 8. 34; Luke 9. 23.

[c] John 12. 25.

A.D. 31.

[d] Luke 10. 16; John 13. 20.

[f] Luke 7. 18.

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(37) **He that loveth father or mother more than me.**—The words are important, partly in themselves, partly as explaining the stronger phrase of Luke xiv. 26, 27, which speaks of a man "hating father or mother" as a condition of discipleship. Where two affections come into collision, the weaker must give way; and though the man may not and ought not to cease to love, yet he must act as if he hated—disobey, and, it may be, desert—those to whom he is bound by natural ties, that he may obey the higher supernatural calling.

(38) **He that taketh not his cross.**—The words were hardly a specific announcement of the manner of our Lord's death, though they imply, interpreted by events, a distinct prevision of it, such as that which we trace in John iii. 14. To the disciples they would recall the sad scene which Roman rule had made familiar to them, the procession of robbers or rebels, each carrying the cross on which he was to suffer to the place of execution. They would learn that they were called to a like endurance of ignominy and suffering. When they saw their Master Himself carrying His own cross, the words would come back to their minds with a new significance.

(39) **He that findeth his life.**—The word is the same as that translated "soul" (*i.e.*, that by which man lives in the lower or the higher sense of life) in verse 28. The point of the maxim lies in the contrast between the two senses. To gain the lower now is to lose the higher hereafter, and conversely, to lose the lower for the sake of Christ (*i.e.*, to die a martyr's death in confessing Him) is to gain the higher.

(40) The discourse which had so clearly told of suffering ends with words of promise and the assurance of victory. As Christ was sent by the Father (John xx. 21; comp. Heb. iii. 1), so were they His apostles and representatives; and He would count all honour and affection shown to them as shown also to Himself, and through Him to His Father.

(41) **In the name of a prophet**—*i.e.*, for the sake of that which the name connotes—the prophet's work as a messenger of God, the righteousness of which the living righteous man is the concrete example. The distinction between the two involves the higher inspiration of the prophet as a messenger of God, and perhaps implies that that inspiration belonged to some, and not to all the Twelve, while those who were not to receive that special gift were at all events called to set forth the pattern of a righteous life. The "reward," and the time of its being received, belong to the future glory of the kingdom; and the words of the promise throw the gate wide open, so as to admit not only those whose gifts and characters command the admiration of mankind, but all those who show in action that they are in sympathy with the work for which the gifts have been bestowed.

(42) **One of these little ones.**—The term was familiarly used of the scholars of a Rabbi, and in this sense our Lord, as the great Master, sending forth His disciples, now employs it. He would not disregard even the cup of cold water given to the humblest disciple as such and for the sake of Christ. Taken by themselves, the words do not go beyond this; but the language of Matt. xxv. 40 justifies their extension to every act of kindness done to any man in the name of that humanity which He shares with those whom He is not ashamed to call His brethren (Heb. ii. 11).

## XI.

(1) **He departed thence**—*i.e.*, from the place from which He had sent forth the Twelve. Where this was St. Matthew does not tell us, but ix. 36 makes it probable that it was not in Capernaum nor any other city, but from some spot in the open country where He had rested with them. Their return is narrated, or at least implied, in verse 25, and hence we must infer that the messengers of the Baptist arrived while He was carrying on His work without them. *Their cities* might seem grammatically to point to the towns where the Twelve had been, or to which they belonged; but it is probable that it was used here vaguely for the cities of Galilee in general.

(2) **When John had heard in the prison.**—The position of the Baptist was so far that of a prisoner treated with respect. Herod himself observed him, and heard him gladly. Herodias had not yet found an occasion of revenge. His disciples came and went freely. Some of these we have seen (Matt. ix. 14) as present when our Lord was teaching, and certain to hear of such wonders as those narrated in Matt. viii. and ix. He himself, in the prison of Machærus, was languishing with the sickness of hope deferred for the Messianic kingdom, which he had proclaimed. His disciples brought back word of what they had seen and heard (Luke vii. 18), and yet all things continued as before, and there was no deliverance either for himself or Israel. Under the influence of this disappointment, he sent his two disciples with the question which the next verse records.

he sent two of his disciples, (3) and said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? (4) Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: (5) the blind receive their sight,[a] and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.[b] (6) And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

(7) And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? (8) But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft *clothing* are in kings' houses. (9) But what went ye

[a] Isa. 35. 6.

[b] Isa. 61. 1.

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(3) **Art thou he that should come?**—There are no adequate grounds for assuming, as some have done, that the Baptist sent the disciples only to remove their doubts. The question comes from him; the answer is sent to him. No difficulty in conceiving how the doubt which the question seems to imply could enter into the mind of the Baptist after the testimony which he had borne and that which he had heard, can warrant us in doing violence to what would seem to be the plain meaning of the history. And the meaning of the question is not far to seek. The sickness of deferred hope turns the full assurance of faith into something like despair. So of old Jeremiah had complained, in the bitterness of his spirit, that Jehovah had deceived him (Jer. xx. 7). So now the Baptist, as week after week passed without the appearance of the kingdom as he expected it to appear, felt as if the King was deserting the forerunner and herald of His kingdom. The very wonders of which he heard made the feeling more grievous, for they seemed to give proof of the power, and to leave him to the conclusion that the will was wanting. And so he sends his disciples with the question, which is one of impatience rather than doubt, "Art Thou the coming One of whom the prophets spoke" (Ps. xl. 7; cxviii. 26; Mal. iii. 1)? but if so, why tarry the wheels of Thy chariot? Are we still to look for another and a different Christ?"

(4) **Go and shew John again.**—There is no Greek adverb answering to the last word. St. Luke (vii. 21) adds that "in that same hour Jesus cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits," and they were therefore to carry back their report as eye-witnesses.

(5) **The blind receive their sight.**—Apparently no facts were stated which might not have already come to the ears of the Baptist. At least one instance of each class of miracle has already been recorded by St. Matthew, the blind (ix. 27), the lame (ix. 6), the leper (viii. 2), the dead (ix. 25). The raising of the widow's son at Nain, which in St. Luke follows closely upon the healing of the centurion's servant, must also have preceded what is here narrated. What the Baptist needed was, not the knowledge of fresh facts, but a different way of looking at those he already knew. Where these works were done, there were tokens that the coming One had indeed come. But above all signs and wonders, there was another spiritual note of the kingdom, which our Lord reserves as the last and greatest: *Poor men have the good news proclaimed to them.* They are invited to the kingdom, and told of peace and pardon. It is as though our Lord knew that the Baptist, whose heart was with the poor, would feel that One who thus united power and tenderness could be none other than the expected King.

(6) **Blessed is he.**—The words at once confirm the view that the question which the messengers had brought came from the Baptist himself, and show how tenderly our Lord dealt with the impatience which it implied. A warning was needed, but it was given in the form of a beatitude which it was still open to him to claim and make his own. Not to find a stumbling-block in the manner in which the Christ had actually come, that was the condition of entering fully into the blessedness of His kingdom.

(7) **As they departed.**—There was an obvious risk that those who heard the question of the Baptist, and our Lord's answer, might be led to think with undue harshness, perhaps even with contempt, of one who had so far failed in steadfastness. As if to meet that risk, Jesus turns, before the messengers were out of hearing, to bear His testimony to the work and character of John. But a little while before, almost as his last public utterance, the forerunner had borne his witness to the King (John iii. 23—36), and now He, in His turn, recognises to the full all the greatness of the work which that forerunner had accomplished.

**What went ye out . . . ?**—The tense points to the time when the first proclamation of the Baptist, as the voice of one crying in the wilderness, drew out crowds to listen to him. Jesus, by His question, bids them recall the impression which had then been made upon them. Had they gone out to see "a reed shaken by the wind?" The imagery was, of course, drawn from the rushes that grew upon the banks of the Jordan, but the use of the singular shows that it was meant to be understood symbolically. Had they gone out to see one who was swayed this way and that by every blast of popular feeling? No, not that; something quite other than that was what they had then beheld.

(8) **A man clothed in soft raiment?**—Had they seen, then, one who shared in the luxury, and courted the favour of princes? No, not so, again. They that wear soft clothing, or, as in St. Luke's report, "they that are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately," are in kings' houses. The words had a more pointed reference than at first sight appears. Jewish historians (Jost, *Gesch. Jud.* I. 259.) record how in the early days of Herod the Great a section of the scribes had attached themselves to his policy and party, and in doing so had laid aside the sombre garments of their order, and had appeared in the gorgeous raiment worn by Herod's other courtiers. The Herodians of the Gospel history were obviously the successors of these men in policy, and probably also in habits and demeanour; and the reference to "kings' houses" admits of no other application than to the palace of Antipas. We may trace, with very little hesitation, a vindictive retaliation for these very words in the "gorgeous robe" with which Herod arrayed Him in mockery when the Tetrarch and the Christ stood for one brief hour face to face with each other (Luke xxiii. 11).

(9) **What went ye out for to see? A prophet?**—The words again throw the hearers back upon the

out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. (10) For this is *he*, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,[a] which shall prepare thy way before thee. (11) Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. (12) And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence,[1] and the violent take it by force.[b] (13) For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. (14) And if ye will receive *it*, this is Elias,[c] which was for to come. (15) He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

(16) But whereunto shall I liken this generation?[d] It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto

[1] Or, *is gotten by force, and they that thrust men.*

[b] Luke 16. 16.

[a] Mal. 3. 1.

[c] Mal. 4. 5.

[d] Luke 7. 31.

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impressions made on them when they first saw and heard the Baptist. They then went out to see a prophet, and they were not disappointed. Nothing that they had seen or heard since was to lead them to think less worthily of him now. He was indeed a prophet, taught by the Spirit of Jehovah, predicting the glory of the kingdom; but he was also something more than this—a worker in the fulfilment of what he thus proclaimed.

(10) **This is he, of whom it is written.**—The words in the Greek are not taken from the LXX. version of Mal. iii. 1, but are a free translation from the Hebrew. In the original it is Jehovah Himself who speaks of His own coming: "Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before *Me*." In the Evangelist's paraphrase it is Jehovah who speaks to the Christ—"shall prepare Thy way before Thee." The reference to the prophecy of Malachi in the song of Zacharias (Luke i. 76) had from the first connected it with the Baptist's work, and our Lord in thus adopting that reference, stamps the whole chapter with the character of a Messianic prophecy.

(11) **There hath not risen a greater.**—The greatness of men is measured by a divine not a human standard. The prophet, who was more than a prophet, the herald or the forerunner of the kingdom, was greater in his work, his holiness, his intuition of the truth, than the far-off patriarchs, than David or Solomon, and, *à fortiori*, than the conquerors and the destroyers, such as Alexander, Pompey, Herod, on whom the world bestowed the title of "the great" ones.

**He that is least in the kingdom of heaven.**—The Greek gives the comparative, not the superlative—he whose relative position in the kingdom of heaven is less than that of John. Very many commentators have thought, strangely enough, that our Lord referred in these words to Himself. He in the eyes of men was esteemed less than the Baptist, and yet was really greater. But this is surely not the meaning of the words. (1) It would be but a poor truism to have declared that the King was greater than the herald; and (2) there is no example of our Lord's so speaking of Himself elsewhere. On the other hand, He does speak of His disciples as the "little ones" who believe on Him (Matt. x. 42), and as applied to them the words have a meaning at once natural and adequate. The least of His disciples, rejoicing in His presence, in communion with Him, in His revelation of the Father, though less than John in fame, work, the rigour of ascetic holiness, was yet above him in the knowledge of the truth, and therefore in blessedness and joy.

(12) **The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence.**—The Greek verb may be either in the middle voice, "forces its way violently," or passive, as in the English version, but there is little doubt that the latter is the right rendering. The words describe the eager rush of the crowds of Galilee and Judæa, first to the preaching of the Baptist, and then to that of Jesus. It was, as it were, a city attacked on all sides by those who were eager to take possession of it.

**The violent take it by force.**—The Greek noun is without the article, "men who are violent or use force." The meaning is determined by the preceding clause. The "violent" are men of eager, impetuous zeal, who grasp the kingdom of heaven—*i.e.*, its peace, and pardon, and blessedness—with as much eagerness as men would snatch and carry off as their own the spoil of a conquered city. Their new life is, in the prophet's language, "given them as a prey" (Jer. xxi. 9; xlv. 5). There is no thought of hostile purpose in the words.

(13) **All the prophets and the law.**—The usual order is inverted, because stress is laid on the prophetic rather than the legislative aspect of previous revelation. They did their work pointing to the kingdom of heaven in the far-off future of the latter days, but John saw it close at hand, and proclaimed its actual appearance.

(14) **This is Elias.**—The words of Malachi (iv. 5) had led men to expect the reappearance of the great Tishbite in person as the immediate precursor of the Christ. It was the teaching of the scribes then (Matt. xvii. 10; John i. 21); it has lingered as a tradition of Judaism down to our own time. A vacant chair is placed for Elijah at all great solemnities. Even Christian interpreters have cherished the belief that Elijah will appear in person before the second Advent of the Lord. The true meaning of the words of Malachi had, however, been suggested in the words of the angel in Luke i. 17, "He shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias," and is here distinctly confirmed. The words "if ye will (*i.e.*, are willing to) receive it" imply the consciousness that our Lord was setting aside a popular and strongly-fixed belief: "If you are willing and able to receive the truth that John was in very deed doing the work of Elijah, you need look for no other in the future."

(15) **He that hath ears to hear.**—The formula, which meets us here for the first time, is one which our Lord seems to have used habitually after any teaching, in parable or otherwise (chap. xiii. 9; Mark iv. 9), which required more than ordinary powers of thought to comprehend. To take in the new aspect of the coming of Elijah required an insight like that which men needed to take in, without an interpreter, the meaning of the parable of the Sower.

(16) **It is like unto children sitting in the markets.**—The comparison is drawn from one of the common amusements of the children of an Eastern city. They form themselves into companies, and get up a dramatic representation of wedding festivities and funeral pomp. They play their pipes, and expect

their fellows, (17) and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. (18) For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. (19) The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.

(20) Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done,[a] because they repented not: (21) Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. (22) But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. (23) And thou, Capernaum, which art

[a] Luke 10. 13.

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others to dance; they beat their breasts in lamentation, and expect others to weep. They complain if others do not comply with their demands. To such a company our Lord likens the evil generation in which He and the Baptist lived. They were loud in their complaints of the Baptist because he would not share their self-indulgent mirth; they were bitter against Jesus because He would not live according to the rules of their hypocritical austerity. Thus interpreted, the whole passage is coherent. The more common explanation inverts the comparison, and sees in our Lord and the Baptist those who invite to mourning and to mirth respectively, and are repelled by their sullen playmates. This would in itself give an adequate meaning, but it does not fall in with our Lord's language, which specifically identifies the children who invite *the others* (this rather than "their fellows," is the true reading) with the "generation" which He condemns. The verses that follow, giving the language in which the same generation vented its anger and scorn against the two forms of holiness, agree better with the interpretation here adopted.

(18) **He hath a devil.**—The phrase was a common one, asserting at once the fact of insanity, and ascribing it to demoniacal possession as its cause. (Comp. John vii. 20; viii. 48.) This was the explanation which the scribes gave of John's austerities. The locusts and wild honey were to them the diet of a madman.

(19) **Eating and drinking**—*i.e.*, as in the feast in Matthew's house, or at the marriage-feast of Cana, sharing in the common life of man. The words point almost specifically to the two instances just named, and the very form and phrase recall the question which the Pharisees had asked of the disciples, "Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?" (Luke v. 30).

**Wisdom is justified of her children.**—Literally, *was justified.* This is our Lord's answer for Himself and the Baptist to the contradictory calumnies of the Jews. Men might accuse wisdom, true heavenly wisdom, on this ground or that, but she would be, or rather (the tense implying a generalised fact) *is* evermore acquitted, justified, acknowledged as righteous, alike in her severer or more joyous forms, by all who are indeed her children, *i.e.*, by all who seek and love her as the mother of their peace and joy. Like so many of our Lord's other sayings, the parable stretches far and wide through the ages. The evil world rejects all who seek to overcome its evil, some on one pretext, some on another; but true seekers after wisdom will welcome holiness in whatever form it may appear, cheerful or ascetic, Protestant or Romish, Puritan or liberal, so long as it is real and true.

(20) **Then began he to upbraid.**—The rebuke is inserted by St. Luke in our Lord's charge to the Seventy (x. 13—15). As in the case of the passages common to both Evangelists in Matt. x. and Luke x., we need not assume that the former has compiled a discourse from fragments collected separately. It is far more natural and probable to believe that our Lord in this case, as in others, used at different times the same, or nearly the same, forms of speech.

(21) **Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida!**—It is singular enough that no miracles are recorded in the Gospels as wrought at either of these cities. The latter was indeed nigh unto the scene of the feeding of the five thousand, but that comes later on in the Gospel narrative. The former is only known to us through this passage and the parallel words of Luke x. 12—16. We may at least infer from the absence of any such record the genuineness of the words reported and the truthful aim of the Evangelists. The words were not an after-thought dove-tailed into the narrative. The narrative was not expanded or modified in order to explain the words. In St. Luke the "woes" are connected with the mission of the Seventy. They may well have been uttered, as has been said above, more than once.

The position of Chorazin is described by Jerome as being on the shore of the lake, about two miles from Capernaum.

The Bethsaida here spoken of was probably that on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. The name in Aramaic signifies "House of Fish;" and it was therefore, we may believe, on the shore, and not far from the two cities with which it is here grouped.

**Tyre and Sidon.**—The two cities are chosen as being, next to Sodom and Gomorrah (chap. x. 15, and verse 24), the great representative instances of the evil of the heathen world, and of the utter overthrow to which that evil was destined (Ezek. xxvii., xxviii.). Over and above their immediate import the words are full of meaning as throwing light on the ultimate law of God's dealings with the heathen world. Men are judged not only according to what they have done, but according to what they might or would have done under other circumstances and conditions of life. In other words, they are judged according to their opportunities. The whole teaching of St. Paul in Rom. ii., all the wider hopes of later times as to the future of mankind, are but the development of the truth partly declared and partly suggested here.

(23) **And thou, Capernaum.**—This city had already witnessed more of our Lord's recorded wonders than any other. That of the nobleman's son (John iv. 46—54), of the demoniac (Mark i. 21—28), the man sick of the palsy (Matt. ix. 1—8), of Peter's wife's mother and the many works that followed (Matt. viii. 1—14), of the woman with the issue of blood, and of Jairus's daughter (Matt. ix. 18—26), of the centurion's

exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. (24) But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.

(25) At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father,[a] Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. (26) Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. (27) All things are delivered unto me of my Father:[b] and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father,[c] save the Son, and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*.

(28) Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you

[b] John 3. 35.

[c] John 6. 46.

[a] Luke 10. 21.

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servant (Matt. viii. 5—13), had all been wrought there, besides the unrecorded "signs" implied in Luke iv. 23. In this sense, and not in any outward prosperity, had Capernaum been "exalted unto heaven." All this, however, had been in vain, and therefore the sentence was passed on it that it should be "brought down to hell," *i.e.*, to *Hades*, the grave, not *Gehenna*. The words point, as the next verse shows, to the ultimate abasement of the guilty city in the day of judgment, but the words have had an almost literal fulfilment. A few ruins conjecturally identified mark the site of Capernaum. Not one stone is left upon the other in Chorazin and Bethsaida.

(25) **Answered and said.**—The phrase is more or less a Hebraism, implying that the words rose out of some unrecorded occasion. St. Luke connects them (x. 17—24) with the return of the Seventy; but as their mission is not recorded by St. Matthew, it seems reasonable to connect them, as here recorded, with the return of the Twelve, and their report of their work (Mark vi. 30; Luke ix. 10). Their presence, it may be noted, is implied in the narrative with which the next chapter opens. The words, however, were probably repeated as analogous occasions called for them.

**I thank thee.**—Literally, *I confess unto Thee*—*i.e.*, "acknowledge with praise and thanksgiving." The abruptness with which the words come in points to the fragmentary character of the record which St. Matthew incorporates with his Gospel. The context in St. Luke implies a reference to the truths of the kingdom which the disciples had proclaimed, and makes special mention of the joy which thus expressed itself. The two grounds of that joy are inseparably linked together. The "wise and prudent" (comp. the union of the same words in 1 Cor. i. 19) were the scribes and Pharisees, wise in their conceit, seeking men's praise rather than truth as truth, and therefore shut out from the knowledge that requires above all things sincerity of purpose. The "babes" were the disciples who had received the kingdom in the spirit of a little child, child-like, and sometimes even childish, in their thoughts of it, but who, being in earnest and simple-hearted, were brought under the training which was to make them as true scribes for the kingdom of heaven. He, their Lord, taught them as they were able to bear it, giving (to use St. Paul's familiar image) the milk that belonged to babes (1 Cor. iii. 2); but beyond His personal teaching there were the flashes of intuition by which (as, conspicuously, in the case of Peter's confession, Matt. xvi. 17) new truths were suddenly disclosed to them, or old truths seen with increasing clearness.

(26) **For so it seemed good.**—Literally, *Yea, Father,* [*I thank Thee*] *that thus it was Thy good pleasure.* The words recall those that had been spoken at our Lord's baptism ("in whom I am well pleased," chap. iii. 17), and the song of the heavenly host on the night of the Nativity ("good will among men," Luke ii. 14). The two verses are remarkable as the only record outside St. John's Gospel of a prayer like that which we find in John xvii. For the most part, we may believe, those prayers were offered apart on the lonely hill-side, in the darkness of night; or, it may be, the disciples shrank in their reverence, or perhaps in the consciousness of their want of capacity, from attempting to record what was so unspeakably sacred. But it is noteworthy that in this exceptional instance we find, both in the prayer and the teaching that follows it in St. Matthew and St. Luke, turns of thought and phrase almost absolutely identical with what is most characteristic of St. John. It is as though the isolated fragment of a higher teaching had been preserved by them as a witness that there was a region upon which they scarcely dared to enter, but into which men were to be led afterwards by the beloved disciple, to whom the Spirit gave power to recall what had been above the reach of the other reporters of his Master's teaching.

(27) **All things are delivered.**—Literally, *were delivered*, as looking back on the moment of the gift. The "all things," though not limited by the context, are shown by it to refer specially to the mysteries of the kingdom implied in the word "reveal." The wider meaning of the words appears more clearly in chap. xxviii. 18, and in both passages we may trace a formal denial of the claim of the Tempter resting on the assertion that the power and glory of the world had been committed to him (Luke iv. 6).

**Neither knoweth any man the Father.**—The Greek implies full and complete knowledge, and in that sense it was true that no one knew the Son as such in all the ineffable mystery of His being and His work but the Father; that no one fully entered into the Fatherhood of God but He whose relation to Him had been from eternity one of Sonship. To those only who knew God in Christ was the Fatherhood of which Jews and Gentiles had had partial glimpses revealed in all its completeness.

**To whomsoever the Son will reveal him.**—The Greek gives more than the mere future—*is willing to reveal.*

(28) **Come unto me.**—As in the consciousness of this plenitude of power, the Son of Man turns with infinite compassion to those whose weakness and weariness He has shared, and offers them the rest which none other can give them.

**Labour and are heavy laden.**—The words are wide enough to cover every form of human sin and sorrow, but the thought that was most prominent in them at the time was that of the burdens grievous to be borne, the yoke of traditions and ordinances which rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.[a] (30) For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.[b]

CHAPTER XII.—(1) At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn;[c] and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. (2) But when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day. (3) But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did,[d] when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; (4) how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?[e] (5) Or have ye not read in the law,[f] how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless? (6) But I say unto you, That in this

d 1 Sam. 21. 6.

a Jer. 6. 16.

b 1 John 5. 3.

A.D. 31.

c Deut. 23. 25; Mark 2. 23; Luke 6. 1.

e Ex. 29. 32, 33; Lev. 8. 31; & 24. 9.

f Num. 28. 9.

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the Pharisees and scribes had imposed on the consciences of men. (Comp. chap. xxiii. 4, Acts xv. 10.) The first of the two words gives prominence to the active, the latter to the passive, aspect of human suffering, by whatever cause produced.

**I will give you rest.**—The *I* is emphasized in the Greek. He gives what no one else can give—rest from the burden of sin, from the weariness of fruitless toil.

(29) **Take my yoke upon you.**—As the teaching of the Pharisees was a yoke too grievous to be borne, so the yoke of Christ is His teaching, His rule of life, and so is explained by the "learn of Me" that follows. (Comp. Ecclus. li. 26.)

**I am meek and lowly in heart.**—The stress lies upon the last words. Others might be lowly with the lowliness which is ambition's ladder, but pride and self-assertion were reigning in their hearts. The Christ, in His infinite sympathy with men of all classes and conditions, could boldly incur the risk of seeming to boast of His humility, in order that He might win men to come and prove by experience that He was able and willing to give them rest, to hear the tale of their sorrows, and to turn from none with scorn.

**Ye shall find rest unto your souls.**—Here, as often elsewhere in our Lord's teaching, we have a direct quotation from Jeremiah (vi. 16).

(30) **Easy.**—The Greek has a wider range of meaning —*good, helpful, kind, profitable.*

**My burden is light.**—The "burden" of Christ was the commandment that most characterised His teaching—the new commandment that men should love one another; and those who obeyed that commandment would find all to which it bound them light and easy.

## XII.

(1) **At that time.**—St. Luke (vi. 1) defines the time more specifically as "the second first sabbath." The question, what is meant by that term, will be discussed in the Notes on that passage. The facts of the case place it clearly between the Passover and the Feast of Pentecost, between the beginning of the barley and the end of the wheat harvest. The position which the narrative occupies in Mark ii. 23, Luke vi. 1, immediately after the feast in Matthew's house, differs so widely from St. Matthew's arrangement, that we are again at sea in attempting to construct a harmony, and can only regard the words "at that time" as belonging to the separate history in some other position than that in which he has placed it.

**Began to pluck the ears of corn.**—Note St. Mark's stronger phrase, "to make a path, plucking the ears," and St. Luke's description that they ate them, "rubbing them in their hands." The act was permitted by the Law as far as the rights of property were concerned (Deut. xxiii. 25), but it was against the Pharisees' interpretation of the law of the Sabbath. To pluck the ears was to reap, to rub the husks from the grain was to thresh; and the new Teacher was therefore, they thought, tacitly sanctioning a distinct breach of the holiness of the day of rest.

(2) **When the Pharisees saw it.**—In the position in which the narrative stands in the other two Gospels, the Pharisees would appear as belonging to the company that had come down from Jerusalem to watch and accuse the new Teacher (Luke v. 17). He claimed the power to forgive sins, He ate and drank with publicans and sinners. Now they found that He was teaching men to dishonour the Sabbath, as He had already taught them in Jerusalem (John v. 10, 16).

(3) **Have ye not read . . . ?**—The question was an appeal to the Pharisees on the ground where they thought themselves strongest. For them it was an argument *à fortiori.* Would they accuse David of sacrilege and Sabbath-breaking because he, in a case of urgent need, set at nought the two-fold law of ordinances? If they shrank from that, was it not inconsistent to condemn the disciples of Jesus for a far lighter transgression?

(4) **How he entered into the house of God.**—Strictly speaking, it was in the tabernacle at Nob, where Ahimelech (possibly assisted by Abiathar, Mark ii. 26) was ministering as high priest (1 Sam. xxi. 6). The shewbread, or "bread of oblation," consisted of twelve loaves, in two rows of six each, which were offered every Sabbath day (Ex. xxv. 30; xl. 23; Lev. xxiv. 5—9), the loaves of the previous week being then removed and reserved for the exclusive use of the priests. The necessity of the case, however, was in this instance allowed to override the ceremonial ordinance, and our Lord teaches men through that single instance to see the general principle that when positive commands and necessities involving the good of man come into collision, the latter, not the former, must prevail.

(5) **The priests in the temple profane the sabbath.**—The work of the priests, as described, *e.g.*, in Num. xxviii. 9, viz., slaying victims, placing the shewbread, involved an amount of labour which, in work of any other kind, would have broken the Sabbath rest; yet no one blamed the priests, for they were serving in the Temple of Jehovah.

(6) **In this place is one greater than the temple.**—Better, *Here is something greater than the Temple.* The Greek adjective is neuter in the better MSS., and the word "here" we may think of as accompanied (like the "destroy this temple" of John ii. 19) by a gesture which interpreted the words. The passage

place is *one* greater than the temple. (7) But if ye had known what *this* meaneth, I will have mercy,[a] and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. (8) For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day. (9) And when he was departed thence,[b] he went into their synagogue:

(10) And, behold, there was a man which had *his* hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him. (11) And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift *it* out? (12) How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days. (13) Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.

(14) Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council[1] against him, how they

[a] Hos. 6. 6; ch. 9. 13.

[b] Mark 3. 1; Luke 6. 6.

[1] Or, *took counsel.*

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thus referred to furnishes obviously the true explanation of our Lord's assertion of His greatness here, and spoken, as it probably was, to scribes from Jerusalem, may have been intended to remind them of it. The body of the Son of Man was the truest, highest temple of God, and the disciples who ministered to Him were entitled to at least the same privilege as the priests in the Temple at Jerusalem. The range of the words is, however, wider than this their first and highest application. We are taught to think of the bodies of other sons of men as being also, in their measure, temples of God (1 Cor. vi. 19), and so there follows the conclusion that all works of love done for the bodies or the souls of men as little interfere with the holiness of a day of rest as did the ministrations of the priests as they laboured to weariness in the ritual of the Temple. Inasmuch as the disciples were not at the time engaged in any direct service to their Master, but were simply satisfying the cravings of their own hunger, their act, strictly speaking, came under the general rather than the special application of the words. Man, as such, to those who take a true measure of his worth, is greater than any material temple.

(7) **I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.**—Yet a third argument follows from the Old Testament (Hos. vi. 6). The teachers or interpreters of the Law had failed to catch the meaning of the simplest utterances of the prophets. "Mercy and not sacrifice," moral and not positive duties, these made up the true life of religion, and were alone acceptable to God. It was because they had inverted the right relation of the two that they had, in this instance, condemned those whom our Lord now declares to have been in this respect absolutely guiltless.

(8) **For the Son of man.**—The words contain the ground for the authoritative judgment of the previous verse. They assert that this also came within the limits of His jurisdiction as the Messiah, just as the power to forgive sins had been claimed by Him under the same title. In both instances, however, the choice of the title is significant. What is done is done by Him as the representative of humanity, acting, as it were, in its name, and claiming for it as such what He thus seems at first to claim for Himself as a special and absolute prerogative.

(9) **He went into their synagogue**—*i.e.*, that of the Pharisees whom He had just reproved, probably, therefore, the synagogue of Capernaum. The narratives in St. Matthew and St. Mark convey the impression that it was on the same Sabbath. St. Luke, however, as if he had made more careful inquiry, states definitely that it was on another, and this the others do not directly contradict.

(10) **There was a man which had his hand withered.**—Two facts are implied: (1.) That the Pharisees expected our Lord to heal the man thus afflicted. They knew that commonly the mere sight of suffering of this kind called out His sympathy, and that the sympathy passed into act. (2.) That they had resolved, if He did so heal, to make it the ground of a definite accusation before the local tribunal, the "judgment" of Matt. v. 21. The casuistry of the Rabbis allowed the healing art to be practised on the Sabbath in cases of life and death, but the "withered hand," a permanent infirmity, obviously did not come under that category.

(11, 12) **Will he not lay hold on it?**—As the reasoning takes the form of an *argumentum ad hominem*, it is clear that the act was regarded as a lawful one, even by the more rigid scribes. The Talmud discusses the question, but does not decide it. Some casuists solved the problem by a compromise. The sheep was not to be pulled out of the pit till the Sabbath was over, but in the meantime it was lawful to supply it with fodder. In St. Mark and St. Luke the question is given in another form, and without the illustration, which we find in St. Luke, in another connection, in xiv. 5. Jesus bids the man with the withered hand stand up in the midst, and then puts the question, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath day or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?" The alternative thus presented as a dilemma was a practical answer to their casuistry. They would have said, "Leave the man as he is till the Sabbath is over;" and our Lord's answer is that in that case good would have been left undone, and that not to do good when it lies in our power is practically to do evil.

(13) **Then saith he to the man.**—St. Mark, with his usual vividness, adds the look and gesture and feeling which accompanied the words, "looking round about on them with anger, being grieved at the hardness of their hearts."

**It was restored whole**—*i.e.*, as the tense implies, in the act of stretching the hand forth. The man's ready obedience to the command, which if he had not believed in the power of Jesus would have seemed an idle mockery, was, *ipso facto*, a proof that he had "faith to be healed."

(14) **Held a council against him.**—If, as seems probable, these Pharisees included those who had come from Jerusalem, the deliberation was of more importance in its bearing on our Lord's future work than if it had been a mere meeting of the local members of the party. It is significant that St. Mark adds (iii. 6) that they called the Herodians into their counsels. These latter have not yet been mentioned in the Gospel history, but they had probably been irritated by the marked

might destroy him. ⁽¹⁵⁾ But when Jesus knew *it*, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all; ⁽¹⁶⁾ and charged them that they should not make him known: ⁽¹⁷⁾ that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, ⁽¹⁸⁾ Behold my servant,[a] whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. ⁽¹⁹⁾ He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. ⁽²⁰⁾ A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. ⁽²¹⁾ And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

⁽²²⁾ Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil,[b] blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the

[a] Isa. 42. 1.

[b] Luke 11. 14.

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reference to them and their habits of life in the contrast which our Lord drew between them and the Baptist. (Comp. Note on chap. xi. 8.)

(15) **He withdrew himself from thence.**—The coalition of the two dominant parties led to a temporary retirement from Capernaum as the usual scene of His labours. In this matter He was setting forth in act, as an example, the rule which He had previously given as a precept (chap. x. 23).

**He healed them all**—*i.e.*, all that had need of healing, and fulfilled its conditions.

(16) **And charged them that they should not make him known.**—In other cases that have come before us we have seen reason to connect this command with the spiritual discipline which was best for those who had been healed. Here the generalised character of the command leads us to look for another explanation. The hour of final conflict and suffering had not yet come, and Jesus would not hasten it. The clouds were gathering, but the night had not yet come, and He sought to work while it was yet day, and therefore (again giving an example of His own precept that His disciples should be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves," chap. x. 16) sought to avoid premature occasions of offence.

(17) **That it might be fulfilled.**—The quotation of Isa. xlii. 1 (not from the LXX., but in a free translation from the Hebrew) in reference to this reserve and reticence, and therefore in a sense which seems to us to fall far short of its full meaning, shows how deep an impression it had made on the mind of the Evangelist in connection with our Lord's conduct. One who united thus the attributes of divine power with such entire freedom from the ostentation of ambition could be none other than the true ideal King.

(18) **Behold my servant.**—The mysterious "servant of the Lord," who is the central figure of the last part of Isaiah's prophecies, appears sometimes as the representative of Israel's righteousness, sometimes of its sins, now as one who bore his witness as a prophet and messenger of God, now as standing apart from all others in solitary greatness, or yet more solitary suffering. In each of these aspects the words of Isaiah found their highest fulfilment in the Son of Man. In referring these words to the Messiah, the Evangelist was following in the footsteps of the Chaldee Paraphrase, but we must remember also that the words recorded as heard at the Baptism of Jesus (almost verbally identical with those of the prophecy now cited) must also have suggested the application, especially as connected with the promise, "I will put My Spirit upon Him," which had then received its fulfilment.

**He shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.**—The word "judgment" has a wide range of meaning in the Hebrew of Isaiah, and includes the work of a king, as teaching, no less than as executing, righteousness. As yet, of course, the work of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles had not begun, but St. Matthew notes, as it were, by anticipation, the spirit of love and gentleness which, when he wrote his Gospel, had brought them also within the range of the judgments—*i.e*, of the life-giving truths—of the righteous Judge. It is one of the many instances in which his record, though obviously written for Jews, is yet emphatically a Gospel for the Gentiles.

(19) **He shall not strive, nor cry.**—The words point to the pervading calmness which had impressed itself upon the mind of the Evangelist, and which stood out in marked contrast to the wrangling of Jewish scribes, the violence of Roman officers, yet more, it may be, to that of false prophets and leaders of revolt, such as Judas of Galilee had been. St. Matthew had probably known something of each of those types of character, and felt how different that of the Christ was from all of them.

(20) **A bruised reed shall he not break.**—The prophet's words described a character of extremest gentleness. The "bruised reed" is the type of one broken by the weight of sorrow, or care, or sin. Such a one men in general disregard or trample on. The Christ did not so act, but sought rather to bind up and strengthen. The "smoking flax" is the wick of the lamp which has ceased to burn clearly, and the clouded flame of which seems to call for prompt extinction. Here (as afterwards, in chap. xxv. 1—8) we read a parable of the souls in which the light that should shine before men has grown dim. Base desires have clogged it; it is no longer fed with the true oil. For such the self-righteous Pharisee had no pity; he simply gave thanks that his own lamp was burning. But the Christ in His tenderness sought, if it were possible, to trim the lamp and to pour in the oil till the flame was bright again. We cannot help feeling, as we read the words, that the publican-apostle had found their fulfilment in his own personal experience of the profound tenderness of his Master.

**Till he send forth judgment unto victory.**—In the Hebrew, *unto truth.* The citation was apparently from memory. What is implied in both readings is, that this tender compassion was to characterise the whole work of the Christ until the time of final judgment should arrive, and truth should at last prevail.

(21) **And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.**—Better, *shall hope.* The Hebrew gives "in his law," but St. Matthew follows the LXX.

(22) The narrative that follows is again a stumbling-block in the way of harmonists. St. Luke (xi. 14) places it after the feeding of the five thousand; St. Mark (iii. 22) immediately after the mission of the Twelve. A like narrative has met us in chap. ix. 32, and it is probable enough that the charge was repeated as often as

blind and dumb both spake and saw. (23) And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? (24) But when the Pharisees heard *it*,[a] they said, This *fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub[1] the prince of the devils. (25) And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: (26) and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? (27) And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast *them* out? therefore they shall be your judges. (28) But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. (29) Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house. (30) He that is not with me is against

[a] ch. 9. 34.

[1] Gr. *Beelzebul*: and so ver. 27.

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the occasion presented itself, and as often answered in identical or like words. St. Mark states that the Pharisees who brought it were those who had come down from Jerusalem, and this falls in with all that we have seen of the activity of those emissaries of the party.

**Possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb.**—In chap. ix. 32, the man was simply dumb; here the phenomena of the suspension of conscious sensation and volition were more complicated.

(23) **Is not this the son of David?**—The people use (as the blind man had done in Matt. ix. 27) the most popular of all the synonyms of the Christ.

(24) **Beelzebub the prince of the devils.**—(See Notes on chap. ix. 34; x. 25.) The words appear to have been whispered by the Pharisees among the people. They were not addressed to Jesus. The charge is significant as showing that the Pharisees admitted the reality of the work of healing which they had witnessed, and were driven to explain it by assuming demoniacal agency.

(25) **Jesus knew their thoughts.**—The Searcher of Hearts saw the meaning of the whispers and the looks of real or affected horror, and now enters on a full answer to the charge. Of all the accusations brought against Him this was the one that caused the greatest pain, and drew forth the most indignant answer. He had restored peace and joy, freedom of reason and will to those who had lost them, had been doing His Father's work on earth, and He was accused of being in league with the powers of evil. The work of healing was represented as the bait of the Tempter luring men to their final destruction.

**Every kingdom divided against itself.**—The answer assumes, as the teaching of the New Testament does from first to last, the existence of a kingdom of evil, compact and organised, with a distinct unity of purpose. The laws which govern the life of other kingdoms are applicable to that also. Its head and ruler was not likely to enter on a work which was self-destructive. Reason, calmness, peace, these were not his gifts to men.

(26) **If Satan cast out Satan.**—In the Greek the name has the article in both places, as pointing to the one great adversary. It is not that one Satan casts out another, but that he, on the assumption of the Pharisees, casts out himself. Satan is not personally identified with the demon, the deaf or dumb spirit, that had possessed the man, but the language implies that where evil enters into the soul, Satan enters also. (Comp. John xiii. 27.) There is, as it were, a seeming ubiquity, a *solidarité*, in the power of evil, as there is admittedly in the sovereign power of good.

(27) **By whom do your children cast them out?**—The "children" of the Pharisees are their disciples, and in this case, such as practised exorcism, like the sons of Sceva in Acts xix. 13. The belief in demoniacal possession had as its natural accompaniment the claim on the part of those who could control the disordered reason of the possessed person of power to cast out the demon. We need not assume that such power was always a pretence, or rested only on spells and incantations. Earnestness, prayer, fasting, faith—these are always mighty in intensifying the power of will, before which the frenzied soul bows in submission or yields in confidence, and these may well have been found among the better and truer Pharisees. Our Lord's question, indeed, requires for its logical validity the admission that the "children" of the accusers did really cast out demons, and that not by Beelzebub.

(28) **By the Spirit of God.**—In Luke xi. 20 we have as an equivalent phrase, "the finger of God." So in Old Testament language the fulness of the prophet's inspiration was expressed in the words, "the hand of the Lord was strong upon me" (Ezek. iii. 14). The second hymn in the Ordination Service reproduces the symbolism in the words addressed to the Holy Spirit—

> "In faithful hearts thou writ'st thy law,
> The finger of God's hand;"

and it obviously connects itself with the older language which describes the Ten Commandments as written on the two tables of stone with "the finger of God" (Ex. xxxi. 18).

**Then the kingdom of God is come unto you.**—The word describes a coming suddenly, unlooked for, sooner than men expected. The argument may be briefly formulated thus:—The work was confessedly superhuman, either from the power of Satan or that of God, but the former hypothesis was excluded by the reasoning of verses 25—27; the latter was therefore the only explanation. But if so, if Jesus gave proof that He was thus filled with the power of the Spirit to heal and save, then He was what He claimed to be, the Head of the divine kingdom. That kingdom had burst upon men unawares.

(29) **How can one enter into a strong man's house.**—The parable implied in the question appears in a fuller form in Luke xi. 21, 22. Here it will be enough to note that the "strong man" is Satan. The "house" is the region which is subject to him—*i.e.*, either the world at large, or the spirits of individual men; the "goods" or "instruments" (comp. the "armour" of Luke xi. 22) are the demons or subordinate powers of evil by which he maintains his dominion; the "binding of the strong man" is the check given to the tyranny of Satan by emancipating the possessed sufferers from their thraldom; the "spoiling of the house" implies the final victory over him.

(30) **He that is not with me is against me.**—The words seem at first at variance with the answer to

me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

(31) Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men:[a] but the blasphemy *against* the *Holy* Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. (32) And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come. (33) Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by *his* fruit. (34) O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.[b] (35) A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out

[a] Mark 3. 28; Luke 12. 10; 1 John 5. 16.

[b] Luke 6. 45.

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the sons of Zebedee, when they reported that they had seen one casting out devils in the name of Christ, and had forbidden him "because he followed not" with them. Then they heard, "Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us" (Luke ix. 50); and those words have naturally been the watchword of those who rejoice when Christ is preached every way, and by whatever organisation. In reality, however, the two formulæ do but present the opposite poles of the same truth. In the great struggle between light and darkness, good and evil, God and the enemy of God, there is no neutrality. The man of whom the two disciples complained was fighting against the devil in the name of Christ, and was therefore with Him. The Pharisees were hindering and slandering that work, and therefore were on the side of Satan. They were not gathering in God's harvest of souls, and therefore they were scattering and wasting.

(31) **The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.**—Better, *against the Spirit*, the word "Holy" not being found in any MSS. of authority. The question, What is the nature of the terrible sin thus excluded from forgiveness? has, naturally enough, largely occupied the thoughts of men. What, we ask, is this blasphemy against the Holy Ghost? (1.) The context at least helps us to understand something of its nature. The Pharisees were warned against a sin to which they were drawing perilously near. To condemn the Christ as a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, as breaking the Sabbath, or blaspheming when He said, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," was to speak a word against the Son of Man. These offences might be sins of ignorance, not implying more than narrowness and prejudice. But to see a man delivered from the power of Satan unto God, to watch the work of the Spirit of God, and then to ascribe that work to the power of evil, this was to be out of sympathy with goodness and mercy altogether. In such a character there was no opening for repentance, and therefore none for forgiveness. The capacity for goodness in any form was destroyed by this kind of antagonism. (2.) We dare not say, and our Lord does not say it, that the Pharisees had actually committed this sin, but it was towards this that they were drifting. And in reference to later times, we may say that this is the ultimate stage of antagonism to God and to His truth, when the clearest proofs of divine power and goodness are distorted into evidence that the power is evil. The human nature in that extremest debasement has identified itself with the devil nature, and must share its doom.

(32) **Neither in this world, neither in the world to come.**—The distinction was hardly the same for our Lord's Jewish listeners as it has come to be with us. For them "this world"—better, perhaps, *this age*—was the time before the coming of the Christ; "the age to come" was that which was to follow it. (Comp. Heb. vi. 5, Luke xviii. 30.) Our Lord thus stood on the boundary-line of the two ages, that of the Law and the Prophets, and that of the Kingdom of Heaven, and He declares that while all personal outrages to Himself as the Son of Man, *i.e.*, the Christ, are capable of forgiveness, this enmity against goodness, as good, shuts it out in both. Practically, however, the order of things since the first coming of the Christ has been one of slow and continuous growth, not of rapid and complete change. There has been no "age to come" such as the Jew dreamt of, and we still wait for its manifestation, and think of ourselves as still living in "*this* world," in "*this* age," and of the "world to come" as lying in the far future, or, for each individual soul, beyond the grave. Our Lord's words, it may be noted, clearly imply that some sins wait for their full forgiveness, the entirely cancelling of the past, till the time of that "age to come" which shall witness the great and final Advent. Does this imply that repentance, and therefore pardon, may come in the state that follows death? We know not, and ask questions that we cannot answer, but the words at least check the harsh dogmatic answer in the negative. If one sin only is thus excluded from forgiveness in that "coming age," other sins cannot stand on the same level, and the darkness behind the veil is lit up with at least a gleam of hope.

(33) **Either make the tree good.**—Like most proverbs and parables, the words present different phases, and admit of various applications. As spoken to men of neutral, half-hearted character, they might seem a call, not without a touch of indignant rebuke, to consistency. "At least be thorough; let principles and actions harmonise. Do not think you can produce the fruit of good works from the tree of a corrupt heart." This, however, is not their meaning here. The men to whom our Lord spoke were not neutral, but in direct hostility to Him, and here, therefore, He presses on them logical rather than practical consistency; "make," *i.e.*, reckon, the tree and the fruit as having the same character. If to cast out demons be a good work, then the power from which it flows must be good also. Works of that kind do not come from a corrupt source.

(34) **O generation of vipers.**—Better, as in iii. 7, *brood of vipers*. Here the law which had been pressed in its logical bearing in the preceding verse, is brought in to explain the bitter and evil words of the Pharisees. As long as they were what they were, nothing else was to be looked for. Nothing but the serpent's hiss could come from the brood of vipers, nothing but bitter words from hearts so full of bitterness.

(35) **A good man out of the good treasure.**—A whole parable is wrapt up in this last word. Every thought and desire of a man is added to the ever-

of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. (36) But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. (37) For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

(38) Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.[a] (39) But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: (40) for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly;[b] so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the

[a] ch. 16. 1; Luke 11. 29; 1 Cor. 1. 22.

[b] Jonah 1. 17.

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accumulating store of such desires or thoughts in the inner chamber of his heart, and thence passes out into word or deed. In the ideal division of the context, which excludes neutrality, the treasure is either simply good or simply evil. Practically, it might seem as if the character of most men implied a treasure of good and evil mingled in ever-varying proportion, but that thought is traversed in its turn by the fact that if there is not the unity of goodness which comes from the love of God, there must be the distraction and diversity that come from the love of self, and that this makes the treasure predominantly evil. The poison of worldliness acts in such a case with accumulative power. The same image reappears in reference to the intellectual side of the religious life in xiii. 52.

(36) **Every idle word that men shall speak.**—The teaching, though general in form, still looks back to the hard, bitter words of the Pharisees which had been the starting-point of the discourse. Our Lord does not speak, as we might have expected, of "every evil word," but of "every idle—*i.e.*, useless and purposeless—word," the random utterances which, as being more spontaneous, betray character more than deliberate speech. Such an "idle word" had been the passing taunt, "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub." It is not said, however, that for every such random speech a man shall be condemned, but that he shall give an account for it. It will enter into that great total which determines the divine estimate of his character, and, therefore, the issues of the great "day of judgment."

(37) **By thy words thou shalt be justified.**—Stripped of the after-thoughts which have gathered round it in the later controversies of theologians, the word "justified" means, as its position here shows, the opposite of "condemned," the being "acquitted" either on a special charge or on a general trial of character. In this sense we are able to understand (without entering into the labyrinth of logomachies in which commentators on the Epistles have too often entangled themselves) how it is that men are said to be justified by faith (Rom. iii. 28 *et al.*), justified by works (Jas. ii. 24), justified—as here—by words. All three—faith, works, words—are alike elements of a man's character, making or showing what he is. Faith, implying trust and therefore love, justifies as the root-element of character; "words," as its most spontaneous manifestation; works, as its more permanent results. Of the words and the works men can in some measure judge, and they are the tests by which a man should judge himself. The faith which lies deeper in the life is known only to God, and it is therefore by faith rather than by works that a man is justified before God, though the faith is no true faith unless it moulds the character and therefore enables the man to pass the other tests also.

(38) **Master, we would see a sign from thee.**—The order varies slightly from that in St. Luke, in which the demand for a sign follows on the parable of the unclean spirit returning to his house. In both, however, the sequence of thought appears the same. The tone of authority, as of one who is the judge of all men, leads to the challenge—"Give us a sign by which you may convince us that you have a right thus to speak."

(39) **An evil and adulterous generation.**—The true relation between Israel and Jehovah had been represented by the prophets as that of the wife to her husband (Jer. iii.; Ezek. xvi., xxiii.; Hos. i., ii.). The adulterous generation was therefore one that was unfaithful to its Lord—demanding a sign, instead of finding sufficient proofs of faithfulness and love in what He had already done.

**There shall no sign be given to it.**—The words seem at first to place our Lord's miracles of healing outside the category of signs, and yet it was to these that He referred the messengers of the Baptist as proof that the Christ had indeed come (Matt. xi. 5). They must, however, be interpreted by the context. One sign and only one, such as they demanded, should be given to those for whom the other notes of Messiahship were insufficient, and that should be the sign of the prophet Jonas.

(40) **As Jonas was three days and three nights.**—To understand the words rightly, we have to remember the prominence which our Lord gives to the history of Jonah, and to the repentance of the men of Nineveh, in this and in the parallel passage of Luke xi. 29, and in answer to another demand for a sign in Matt. xvi. 4. In the other passages "the sign of the prophet Jonas" appears with a vague mysteriousness, unexplained. Not a few critics have accordingly inferred from this difference that the explanation given by St. Matthew was an addition to the words actually spoken by our Lord, and that "the sign of the prophet Jonas" was sufficiently fulfilled by His preaching repentance to the wicked and adulterous generation as Jonah had done to the Ninevites. Against this view, however, it may be urged:—(1) That Jonah's work as a preacher was not a "sign" in any sense, and that nothing in his history had this character, except the two narratives of the whale (Jonah i. 17) and the gourd (Jonah iv. 6—10). Any reference to the latter is, of course, out of the question; and it remains therefore, in any case, that we must look to the former as that to which our Lord alluded. (2) That the very difficulty presented by the prediction of "three days and three nights" as compared with the six-and-thirty hours (two nights and one day) of the actual history of the Resurrection, is against the probability of the verse having been inserted as a prophecy after the event. (3) That if we believe that our Lord had a distinct prevision of His resurrection, and foretold it, sometimes plainly and sometimes in dark sayings—and of this the Gospels leave no room for doubt (xvi. 21; xxvi. 32; John

earth. (41) The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas;[a] and, behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here. (42) The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation,[b] and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here. (43) When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man,[c] he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. (44) Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth *it* empty, swept, and garnished. (45) Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first.[d] Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

[c] Luke 11. 24.

[a] Jonah 3. 5.

[b] 1 Kings 10. 1.

[d] Heb. 6. 4, & 10. 26; 2 Pet. 2. 20.

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ii. 19)—then the history of Jonah presented an analogy which it was natural that He should notice. It does not necessarily follow that this use of the history as a prophetic symbol of the Resurrection requires us to accept it in the very letter of its details. It was enough, for the purposes of the illustration, that it was familiar and generally accepted. The purely chronological difficulty is explained by the common mode of speech among the Jews, according to which, any part of a day, though it were but a single hour, was for legal purposes considered as a whole. An instance of this mode of speech is found in 1 Sam. xxx. 12, 13, and it is possible that in the history of Jonah itself the measurement of time is to be taken with the same laxity.

Some incidental facts are worth noticing: (1) that the word translated "whale" may stand vaguely for any kind of sea-monster; (2) that "the heart of the earth," standing parallel as it does to "the heart of the seas," the "belly of hell"—*i.e.*, Sheol and Hades—in Jonah ii. 2, 3, means more than the rock-hewn sepulchre, and implies the descent into Hades, the world of the dead, which was popularly believed to be far below the surface of the earth; (3) that the parable has left its mark on Christian art, partly in the constant use of Jonah as a type of our Lord's resurrection, and partly in that of the jaws of a great whale-like monster as the symbol of Hades; (4) that the special character of the psalm in Jonah ii., corresponding as it does so closely (Jonah ii. 6) with Ps. xvi. 10, 11, may well be thought to have prompted our Lord's reference to it.

(41) **The men of Nineveh shall rise . . .**—The reasoning is parallel with that of the references to Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrah in xi. 21—24, but with this difference, that there the reference was to what might have been, here to what actually had been. The repentance of the heathen, and their search after wisdom, with far poorer opportunities, would put to shame the slowness and unbelief of Israel. The word "rise" is used not of the mere fact of resurrection but of standing up as witnesses. (Comp. John xvi. 8.)

**A greater than Jonas.**—No chapter contains more marvellous assertions of our Lord's superhuman majesty. Greater than the Temple (verse 6), greater than Jonas, greater than Solomon: could this be rightly claimed by any man for himself who was not more than man?

(42) **The queen of the south.**—Literally, *a queen of the south*, as before, *men of Nineveh*, the Greek having no article. Rhetorically, the absence of the article is in this case more emphatic than its presence.

(43) **When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man.**—The parable comes in abruptly, possibly because here, as elsewhere, we have a part and not the whole of a discourse, striking passages noted and put together, now in this order, now in that, while the links that joined them are missing. The inner connection of thought is, however, clear enough. How was it, it might be asked, that Israel had sunk to such a depth of evil? and the answer was found in the similitude which thus opens. The phenomena which furnish the comparison were probably familiar enough. So far as possession was identical in its phenomena, wholly or in part, with insanity, there might be sudden and violent relapses after intervals of calmness and apparent cure. The spirit of the man, under the influence of exorcisms, or prayers, or the sympathy of friends, might assert its freedom for a time, and then yield again to the oppressor. In the history of such a demoniac, which our Lord narrates in the language of the popular belief, He sees a parable of the history of the Jewish people.

**Walketh through dry places.**—The description reflects the popular idea that the parched deserts of Syria and Arabia and Egypt were haunted by demons, who thence came to invade the bodies and the souls of men. So in the book of Tobit (viii. 3), the demon Asmodeus flees to the upper parts of Egypt.

(44) **Empty, swept, and garnished.**—The words have a two-fold symbolism, as representing (1) the state of the possessed man, and (2) that of the nation of which he is made the type. The latter belongs to the interpretation of the parable as a whole. The former portrays the state of the man who has been delivered from the wildness of frenzy, but has been left to the routine of common life and conventional morality, with no higher spiritual influence to protect and guard him.

(45) **Seven other spirits more wicked than himself.**—The number seven, as in the case of Mary Magdalene (Mark xvi. 9; Luke viii. 2), represents a greater intensity of possession, showing itself in more violent paroxysms of frenzy, and with less hope of restoration.

In applying the parable to the religious life of the Jewish people, we have to ask, (1) What answers to the first possession and the expulsion of the evil spirit? (2) What to the seven other spirits joined with the first, and yet more evil? (3) What is the last state, yet future at the time our Lord spoke, which was to be worse than the first? The answer to the first question lies on the surface of their history. Their besetting sin from the time of the Exodus to that of the Captivity had been idolatry and apostasy. The worship of other gods exercised a strange and horrible fascination over them, deprived them, as it were, of light, reason, and true freedom of will. They were enslaved and possessed. Then came the return from the Exile, when, not so much by the teaching of the

(46) While he yet talked to the people, behold, *his* mother and his brethren stood without,[a] desiring to speak with him. (47) Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. (48) But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? (49) And he stretched forth his hand

[a] Mark 3. 31; Luke 8. 20.

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prophets as by that of the scribes and the Pharisees, idolatry seemed banished for ever. But the house was "empty, swept, and garnished." There was no indwelling presence of the enthusiasm of a higher life, only an outward ceremonial religion and rigid precepts, and the show of piety. The hypocrisy of the scribes was the garnishing of the house. And then the old evil came back in the form of Mammon-worship, the covetousness which is idolatry (Eph. v. 5), and with it, bitterness and hate, and the license of divorce, and self-righteousness, and want of sympathy, and that antagonism to good which had come so terribly near to "the sin against the Holy Ghost." That state was bad enough as it was, but our Lord's words point to a future that should be yet worse. We must turn to the picture drawn by the Jewish historian of the crimes, frenzies, insanities of the final struggle that ended in the destruction of Jerusalem, if we would take an adequate measure of the "last state" of that "wicked generation."

(46) **His mother and his brethren.**—Who were these "brethren of the Lord?" The question is one which we cannot answer with any approximation to certainty. The facts in the Gospel records are scanty. In what we gather from the Fathers we find not so much traditions as conjectures based upon assumptions. The facts, such as they are, are these: (1.) The Greek word translated "brother" is a word which has just the same latitude as the term in English. Like that, it might be applied (as in the case of Joseph and his brethren) to half-brothers, or brothers by adoption, or used in the wider sense of national or religious brotherhood. There is no adequate evidence that the term was applied to cousins as such. (2.) The names of four brethren are given in Mark vi. 3, as James (*i.e.*, Jacob) and Joses and Juda and Simon. Three of these names (James, Juda, Simon) are found in the third group of four in the lists of the twelve Apostles. This has suggested to some the thought that they had been chosen by our Lord to that office, and the fact that a disciple bearing the name of Joses was nearly chosen to fill the place of Judas Iscariot (Acts i. 23, in many MSS.) presents another curious coincidence. This inference is, however, set aside by the fact distinctly stated by St. John (vii. 3), and implied in this narrative and in our Lord's reference to a prophet being without honour in his father's house (xiii. 57; Mark vi. 4), that up to the time of the Feast of Tabernacles that preceded the Crucifixion, within six months of the close of our Lord's ministry, His brethren did not believe in His claims to be the Christ. The names, it must be remembered, were so common that they might be found in any family. (3.) Sisters are mentioned in Mark vi. 3, but we know nothing of their number, or names, or after-history, or belief or unbelief. It is clear that these facts do not enable us to decide whether the brothers and sisters were children of Mary and Joseph, or children of Joseph by a former marriage—either an actual marriage on his own account, or what was known as a Levirate marriage (Deut. xxv. 5), for the sake of raising up seed to a deceased brother—or the children of Mary's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas (John xix. 25). The fact of the same name being borne by two sisters, as the last theory implies, though strange, is not incredible, as by-names might come into play to distinguish between them. Each of these views has been maintained with much elaborate ingenuity, and by some writers these brethren, assumed to be sons of Clopas, have been identified (in spite of the above objection, which is absolutely fatal to the theory) with the sons of Alphæus in the list of Apostles. When the course of Christian thought led to an ever-increasing reverence for the mother of the Lord, and for virginity as the condition of all higher forms of holiness, the belief in her perpetual maidenhood passed into a dogma, and drove men to fall back upon one of the other hypotheses as to the brethren. It is a slight argument in their favour, (1) that it would have been natural had there been other children borne by the mother of the Lord, that the fact should have been recorded by the Evangelists, as in the family narratives of the Old Testament (*e.g.*, Gen. v., xi.; 1 Chron. i., ii.), and that there is no record of any such birth in either of the two Gospels that give "the book of the generations" of Jesus; (2) that the tone of the brethren, their unbelief, their attempts to restrain Him, suggest the thought of their being *elder* brothers in some sense, rather than such as had been trained in reverential love for the first-born of the house; (3) that it is scarcely probable that our Lord should have committed His mother to the care of the disciple whom He loved (John xix. 26) had she had children of her own, whose duty it was to protect and cherish her; (4) the absence of any later mention of the sisters at or after the time of the Crucifixion suggests the same conclusion, as falling in with the idea of the sisters and brethren being in some sense a distinct family, with divided interests; (5) lastly, though we enter here on the uncertain region of feeling, if we accept the narratives of the birth and infancy given by St. Matthew and St. Luke, it is at least conceivable that the mysterious awfulness of the work so committed to him may have led Joseph to rest in the task of loving guardianship which thus became at once the duty and the blessedness of the remainder of his life. On the whole, then, I incline to rest in the belief that the so-called "brethren" were cousins who, through some unrecorded circumstances, had been so far adopted into the household at Nazareth as to be known by the term of nearer relationship.

The motive which led the mother and the brethren to seek to speak to our Lord on this occasion lies on the surface of the narrative. Never before in His Galilean ministry had He stood out in such open antagonism to the scribes and Pharisees of Capernaum and Jerusalem. It became known that they had taken counsel with the followers of the tetrarch against His life. Was He not going too far in thus daring them to the uttermost? Was it not necessary to break in upon the discourse which was so keen and stinging in its reproofs? The tone of protest and, as it were, disclaimer in which He now speaks of this attempt to control and check His work, shows what their purpose was. His brethren, St. John reports, did not believe in Him (John vii. 3—5)—*i.e.*, they did not receive Him as the Christ, perhaps not even as a prophet of the Lord.

(49) **Behold my mother and my brethren.**—The words assert in its strongest form the truth which

toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! (50) For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

CHAPTER XIII.—(1) The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side.[a] (2) And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. (3) And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;[b] (4) and when he sowed, some *seeds* fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them

[a] Mark 4. 1.

[b] Luke 8. 5.

A.D. 31.

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we all acknowledge, that though natural relationships involve duties which may not be neglected, spiritual relationships, the sense of brotherhood in a great cause, of devotion to the same Master, are above them, and that when the two clash (as in the case supposed in x. 37), the latter must of right prevail.

The words have naturally occupied a prominent position in the controversial writings of Protestants against what has been judged by them to be the idolatrous worship of the Virgin Mother by the Church of Rome; and it is clear that they have a very direct bearing on it. They do exclude the thought that her intercession is mightier to prevail than that of any other pure and saintly soul. Though spoken with no apparent reference to the abuses of later ages, the words are a protest, all the stronger because of the absence of such reference, against the excess of reverence which has passed into a *cultus*, and the idolatry of dressed-up dolls into which that *cultus* has developed.

(50) **Whosoever shall do the will.**—This is, then, what Christ recognises as the ground of a spiritual relationship. Not outward, but inward fellowship; not the mere fact of baptism, but that which baptism signifies; that doing the will of God, which is the essence of holiness—this is that which makes the disciple as dear to the heart of Christ as was the mother whom He loved so truly.

**Sister, and mother.**—The special mention of the sister suggests the thought that those who bore that name had joined the mother and the brethren in their attempt to interrupt the divine work.

## XIII.

(1, 2) **The same day . . . out of the house.**—In St. Mark the parable of the Sower follows the appearance of the mother and the brethren, as in St. Matthew, but in St. Luke (viii. 4—15, 19—21) the order is inverted. In this case the order of the first Gospel seems preferable, as giving a more intelligible sequence of events. The malignant accusation of the Pharisees, the plots against His life, the absence of real support where He might most have looked for it, the opposition roused by the directness of His teaching—this led to His presenting that teaching in a form which was at once more attractive, less open to attack, better as an intellectual and spiritual training for His disciples, better also as a test of character, and therefore an education for the multitude.

That our Lord had been speaking in a house up to this point is implied in the "standing without" of xii. 46. He now turns to the crowd that followed, and lest the pressure should interrupt or might occasion—as the feeling roused by the teaching that immediately preceded made probable enough—some hostile attack, He enters a boat, probably with a few of His disciples, puts a few yards of water between Himself and the crowd, and then begins to speak.

(3) **He spake many things unto them in parables.**—This is the first occurrence of the word in St. Matthew's Gospel, and it is clear from the question of the disciples in verse 10 that it was in some sense a new form of teaching to them. There had been illustrations and similitudes before, as in that of the houses built on the sand and on the rock in vii. 24—27, and that of the unclean spirit in xii. 43—45, but now for the first time He speaks to the multitude in a parable, without an explanation. The word, which has passed through its use in the Gospels into most modern European languages (*palabras, parôle, parabel*), means literally, *a comparison.* It had been employed by the Greek translators of the Old Testament for the Hebrew word *mashal*, which we commonly render by "proverb," and which, like the Greek *parabolè*, has the sense of similitude. Of many, perhaps of most, Eastern proverbs it was true that they were condensed parables, just as many parables are expanded proverbs. (Comp. John xvi. 25, 29.) In the later and New Testament use of the word, however, the parable takes the fuller form of a narrative embracing facts natural and probable in themselves, and in this respect differs from the fable which (as in those of Æsop and Phædrus, or that of the trees choosing a king in Judg. ix. 8—15) does not keep within the limits even of possibility. The mode of teaching by parables was familiar enough in the schools of the Rabbis, and the Talmud contains many of great beauty and interest. As used by them, however, they were regarded as belonging to those who were receiving a higher education, and the son of Sirach was expressing the current feeling of the schools when he said of the tillers of the soil and the herdsmen of flocks that they "were not found where parables were spoken" (Ecclus. xxxviii. 33). With what purpose our Lord now used this mode of instruction will appear in His answer to the question of the disciples. The prominence given in the first three Gospels to the parable that follows, shows how deep an impression it made on the minds of men, and so far justified the choice of this method of teaching by the divine Master.

(3) **A sower.**—Literally, *the* sower—the man whose form and work were so familiar, in the seed-time of the year, to the peasants of Galilee. The outward framework of the parable requires us to remember the features in which Eastern tillage differs from our own. The ground less perfectly cleared—the road passing across the field—the rock often cropping out, or lying under an inch or two of soil—the patch of good ground rewarding, by what might be called a lucky chance rather than skill of husbandry, the labour of the husbandman.

(4) **The way side**—*i.e.*, on the skirts of the broad path that crossed the field. Here the surface was hard and smooth, the grain lay on the surface, the pigeons and other birds that followed the sower reaped an immediate harvest.

up: (5) some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: (6) and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. (7) And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them. (8) But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. (9) Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. (10) And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? (11) He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. (12) For whosoever hath,[a] to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. (13) Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither

[a] ch. 25. 29.

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(5) **Stony places.**—Either ground in which stones and pebbles were mingled with the soil, or, more probably, where a thin stratum of earth covered the solid rock. Here, of course, growth was rapid through the very circumstance which was afterwards fatal.

(6) **Because they had no root.**—Or, as in Luke viii. 6, "because they lacked moisture." The growth had been over-rapid, and the presence of the underlying rock at once made the heat more intense, and deprived the plant of the conditions of resistance.

(7) **Among thorns.**—Literally, *the thorns*, so familiar to the husbandman. These were not visible at the time of sowing. The ground had been so far cleared, but the roots were left below the surface, and their growth and that of the grain went on simultaneously, and ended in the survival, not of the fittest, but of the strongest. The ears shot up, and did not die suddenly, as in the preceding case, but were slowly strangled till they died away.

(8) **Into good ground.**—Here also the Greek has the definite article, "*the* good ground." The different results imply that even here there were different degrees of fertility. The hundredfold return was, perhaps, a somewhat uncommon increase, but the narrative of Isaac's tillage in Gen. xxvi. 12 shows that it was not unheard of, and had probably helped to make it the standard of a more than usually prosperous harvest.

(9) **Who hath ears to hear.**—The formula had been used, as we have seen before (comp. Note on xi. 15). It was probably familiar in the schools of the Rabbis, when they were testing the ingenuity or progress of their scholars.

(10) **The disciples came, and said unto him.**—They, it would seem, were with our Lord in the boat. The parable was ended, and then followed a pause, during which, unheard by the multitude on the shore, came their question and our Lord's answer.

**Why speakest thou unto them in parables?**—The wonder of the disciples probably included many elements of surprise. Why in parables instead of, as before, the direct announcement of the kingdom of heaven, and the call to prepare for it by repentance? And why to *them*, when they were not students with intellect sharpened in Rabbinic schools, but plain peasants and fishermen, slow and dull of heart?

(11) **It is given.**—Better, *it has been given*, as by the special act of God.

**To know the mysteries.**—The Greek word, like "parable," has passed into modern languages, and has suffered some change of meaning in the process. Strictly speaking, it does not mean, as we sometimes use it—when we speak, *e.g.*, of the mystery of the Trinity, a truth which none can understand—something "awfully obscure" (the definition given in Johnson's *Dictionary*), but one which, kept a secret from others, has been revealed to the initiated. Interpreted by our Lord's teaching up to this time, the mysteries of the kingdom may be referred to the new birth of water and the Spirit (John iii. 5), the judgment to be exercised hereafter by the Son of Man (John v. 25), the power of the Son of Man to forgive sins (ix. 6), the new ideas (no other word will express the fact so well) which He had proclaimed as to the Sabbath (xii. 8), and fasting, and prayer, and alms (vi. 1—18). Those ideas had been proved occasions of offence, and therefore, for the present, the Teacher falls back upon a method of more exoteric instruction.

(12) **Whosoever hath, to him shall be given.**—The words have the ring of a proverb applicable, in its literal meaning, to the conditions of worldly prosperity. There fortune smiles on the fortunate, and nothing succeeds like success. Something like that law, our Lord tells His disciples, is to be found in the conditions of spiritual growth in wisdom. They had some elements of that wisdom, and therefore, using their knowledge rightly, could pass on to more. The people, including even scribes and Pharisees, were as those that had few or none, and not using even the little that they had, were in danger of losing even that. The faithless Jew was sinking down to the level of a superstitious heathen. The proverb accordingly teaches the same lesson as that which we afterwards find developed in the parables of the Talents and the Pounds.

(13) **Because they seeing see not.**—As the words stand in St. Matthew, they might mean that our Lord adopted the method of parables as a condescension to their infirmities, feeding them, as babes in knowledge, with milk, and not with meat. In St. Mark and St. Luke the reason given assumes a penal character, "that seeing they might not see;" as though they were not only to be left in their ignorance, but to be plunged deeper in it. And this, it is obvious, is even here the true meaning, for only thus does this clause answer to the conclusion of the proverb of verse 12, "From him shall be taken away even that which he hath." In one aspect, then, the parable was a veil hiding the truth from them, because they did not seek the truth, and this was the working of the divine law of retribution. But even here we may venture to trace beneath the penalty an element of mercy. The parable could, at all events, do men no harm. It could not rouse the fierce enmity that had been kindled by truth spoken in its plainness. And it might prepare the way, might set men thinking and questioning, and if so, that was at least one step towards the "having," though it were but

do they understand. (14) And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear,[a] and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: (15) for this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. (16) But blessed *are* your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. (17) For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see,[b] and have not seen *them;* and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them.*

(18) Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. (19) When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth *it* not, then cometh the wicked *one,* and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. (20) But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; (21) yet

[b] Luke 10. 24.

[a] Isa. 6. 9; Mark 4. 12; Luke 8. 10; John 12. 40; Acts 28. 26; Rom. 11. 8.

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a very little, which might place them among those to whom more shall be given.

(14) **In them is fulfilled.**—The Greek verb expresses complete fulfilment, but the tense is that of a work still in progress. The prominence given to these words of Isaiah's in the New Testament is very noticeable. Our Lord quotes them here, St. John in John xii. 40. St. Paul cites them in Acts xxviii. 26. The quotation is from the LXX. version. It is as though the words which sounded at the very opening of Isaiah's prophecy as the knell of the nation's life, dwelt on the minds of the Master and His disciples, and prepared them for the seeming fruitlessness and hopelessness of their work.

(15) **Lest at any time they should see.**—The words point to the obstinate, wilful ignorance which refuses to look on the truth, lest the look should lead to conviction, and conviction to conversion—the ignorance of those who love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil (John iii. 19).

(16) **Blessed are your eyes.**—The words are spoken to the small company of disciples in the boat. They were not as the multitude. They might see but dimly, and be slow of heart to understand, but, at least, they had eyes that looked for light, and ears that were open to the divine voice.

(17) **Many prophets and righteous men.**—The prophets of Israel were emphatically "men of desires." They saw afar off the glory of the kingdom of the latter days. Each stood, as it were, on a Pisgah height, and looked on the vision of a land which he was not to enter. The words "have not seen them" seem to stand in verbal contradiction with those of John viii. 56, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day," but it is clear that the difference is simply verbal. There is a joy in looking on the distant prospect which does not exclude, yea, rather implies the desire to reach that which even from afar appears so glorious. The feeling thus described is identical with the "searching diligently" of 1 Pet. i. 10, and with the "desire for a better country" of Heb. xi. 16.

(18) **Hear ye therefore.**—The "ye" is emphatic. The interpretation which is withheld from others is given to *you.*

(19) **When any one heareth the word.**—The explanation has become so familiar to us that it is hard to place ourselves in the position of those to whom it was the unveiling of new truths—the holding up a mirror in which they might see, it might be, their own likeness. Our interest in it may, perhaps, be quickened if we think of it as reflecting what had actually been our Lord's experience. The classes of hearers who had gathered round Him were represented, roughly and generally, by the four issues of the seed scattered by the sower, and all preachers of the truth, from that day to this, have felt that their own experience has presented analogous phenomena.

The ethical sequence described runs thus: The man hears "the word of the kingdom," a discourse, say, like the Sermon on the Mount, or that at Nazareth (Luke iv. 16—21). He does not "understand" it (the fault being moral rather than intellectual), does not attend to it or "take it in." The "wicked one" (note the connection with the clause in the Lord's Prayer, "Deliver us from evil," or *the evil one*) snatches it away even from his memory. At first it seems strange that "the birds of the air" in their multitude should represent the Tempter in his unity; and yet there is a terrible truth in the fact that everything which leads men to forget the truth is, in very deed, doing the work of the great enemy. On the other hand, the birds, in their rapid flight and their gathering flocks, may well represent the light and foolish thoughts that are as the Tempter's instruments. The "way-side" thus answers to the character, which is hardened by the wear and tear of daily life, what we well call its routine, so that the words of Truth make hardly even the most transient impression on it.

**This is he which received seed.**—Our translators try, unsuccessfully, to combine the parable with its interpretation. Literally, and far better, here and in the following verses, *this man it is that is* (the seed) *sown by the way side.*

(20) **Anon with joy receiveth it.**—The second type of character stands in marked contrast with the first. Rapid change, strong emotion, a quicker show of conversion than in the case where it is more real,—such results, it need hardly be said, come under the notice of every earnest preacher. In proportion to the tendency of any system—such as the revivalist meetings of one school, the mission services of another—to cause excitement, are those results likely to be frequent.

(21) **Yet hath he not root in himself.**—The "root" is obviously the conviction which ripens into a purpose and strikes its fibres deep down into reason, conscience, and will.

**Tribulation or persecution.**—It is hardly necessary, or indeed possible, to draw any sharp line of demarcation between the two. "Persecution" implies, perhaps, a more organised attack, and therefore greater hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. (22) He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. (23) But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth *it;* which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

(24) Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: (25) but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. (26) But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit,

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suffering; "tribulation," the thousand petty annoyances to which every convert to the faith of Christ was exposed in the first age of the Church, and to which, it may be added, even now most men and women who seek to be Christians in deed as well as in name are at some time or other in their lives exposed. The words explain the "time of temptation" in St. Luke's report (Luke viii. 13).

**By and by he is offended.**—The adverb is the same as the "anon" of verse 20, and means "immediately." The rapidity of the renegade matches that of the convert. Such a man finds a "stumbling-block" in the sufferings he is called to endure, and turns into a smoother path.

(22) **He also that received seed among the thorns.**—See Note on verse 19. Here there is no over-rapid growth, and there is some depth of earth. The character is not one that wastes its strength in vague emotions, but has the capacity for sustained effort. The evil here is, that while there is strength of purpose, there is not unity of spirit. The man is double-minded, and would fain serve two masters. The "care of this world" (the word is the root of the verb "take no thought" in vi. 25), the deceitfulness of earthly riches—cheating the soul with its counterfeit shows of good—these choke the "word" in its inner life, and it becomes "unfruitful." There may be some signs of fruitfulness, perhaps the "blade" and the "ear" of partial reformation and strivings after holiness, but there is no "full corn in the ear." In St. Luke's words, such men "bring no fruit to perfection" (Luke viii. 14). To the simpler root-forms of evil in St. Matthew, St. Mark adds "the lusts (or desires) about other things"—*i.e.*, the things that are other than the true life—and St. Luke, "the pleasures of life" to which wealth ministers, and for the sake of which, therefore, men pursue it.

(23) **He that heareth the word, and understandeth it.**—The process is not merely an intellectual one. He takes it in, discerns its meaning. The phrases in the other Gospels express the same thing, "hear the word and receive it" (Mark), "in an honest and good heart" hear and retain it (Luke). Even here, however, there are different degrees of the holiness which is symbolised by "bearing fruit"—"some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty"—varying according to men's capacities and opportunities.

It is allowable to fill up the outline-sketch of interpretation which thus formed the first lesson in this method in the great Master's school. (1.) It may seem strange at first that the disciples were not told who in the work of the kingdom answered to "the Sower" of the parable. The interpretation is given in the parable of the Tares ("the Sower of the good seed is the Son of Man"), and, in part, it may be said that this was the one point on which the disciples were not likely to misunderstand Him; but in part also, we may believe, this explanation was not given, because, though the parable was true in the first instance of Him and of His work, He meant them to learn wisdom from it for their own work. True, they were reaping what they had not sown (John iv. 38), yet they too were in their turn to be sowers as well as reapers. (2.) It is obviously one important lesson of the parable that it teaches us to recognise the possible existence of "an honest and good heart" (the first word meaning "noble," "generous," rather than "honest" in our modern sense) prior to the preaching of the word. Such characters were to be found in those living under the Law, or without the Law (Rom. ii. 14), and it was the work of the preacher to look out for them, and win them to something yet higher. What made the ground good, is a question which the parable was perhaps meant to suggest, but does not answer. Theologians may speak of "prevenient grace." The language of John iv. 37, 38 leads us to think of the work of "the Light that lighteth every man." Here also the law holds good that "to him that hath shall more be given." (3.) It lies in the nature of such a parable that it represents the phenomena of the spiritual life only partially. It brings before us four classes of hearers, and seems to assume that their characters are fixed, incapable of change, issuing in results which might have been foreseen. But if so, then the work of the "word" thus preached would seem to be limited to order and progress, and the idea of "conversion"—the change of character—would almost be excluded. We must therefore supplement the parable in its practical application. The soil may be improved; the way-side and the stony places and that which contained the thorns may become as the good ground. It is the work of every preacher and teacher to prepare the soil as well as to sow the seed. In the words of an old prophet, which might almost seem to have suggested the parable itself, they are to "break up the fallow ground and sow not among thorns" (Jer. iv. 3).

(24) **Another parable.**—The explanation of the parable of the Sower had been given apparently in the boat in which our Lord sat with His disciples. Then, again addressing Himself to the multitude on the shore, He spake the parables of the Tares, the Mustard Seed, and the Leaven; then, dismissing the multitude (verse 36), He landed with His disciples, and went into the house which was for a time their home.

(25, 26) **His enemy came and sowed tares.**—The act described was then—and still is—a common form of Eastern malice or revenge. It easily escaped detection. It inflicted both loss and trouble. The "enemy" had the satisfaction of brooding for weeks or months over the prospect of the injury he had inflicted, and the vexation it would cause when discovered. The then appeared the tares also. (27) So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? (28) He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? (29) But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. (30) Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

(31) Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed,[a] which a man took, and sowed in his field: (32) which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

(33) Another parable spake he unto them;[b] The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures[1] of meal, till the whole was leavened. (34) All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables;[c] and without a parable spake

[a] Mark 4. 30; Luke 13. 19.

[b] Luke 13. 20.

[1] The word in the Greek is *a measure containing about a peck and a half, wanting a little more than a pint.*

[c] Mark 4. 33.

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tares, known to botanists as the *Lolium temulentum*, or darnel, grew up at first with stalk and blade like the wheat; and it was not till fructification began that the difference was easily detected. It adds to the point of the parable to remember that the seeds of the tares were not merely useless as food, but were positively noxious.

(29) **But he said, Nay.**—Prior to the interpretation the householder of the parable is clearly intended to be a pattern of patient wisdom. He knows that he can defeat the malice of his foe, but he will choose his own time and plan. While both wheat and tares were green, men might mistake between the two; or, in the act of rooting up the one, tear up the other. When harvest came, and the stalks were dry, and the difference of aspect greater, it would be comparatively easy to gather the tares and leave the wheat.

(31) **The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed.**—The two parables that follow are left without an explanation, as though to train the disciples in the art of interpreting for themselves. And, so far as we can judge, they seem to have been equal to the task. They ask for the meaning of the Tares, but we read of no question about these.

It is scarcely necessary to discuss at any length the botany of the parable. What we call mustard (*Sinapis nigra*) does not grow in the East, any more than with us, into anything that can be called a tree. Probably, however, the name was used widely for any plant that had the pungent flavour of mustard, and botanists have suggested the *Salvadora persica* as answering to the description. (See *Bible Educator*, I. 119.)

The interpretation of the parable lies almost on the surface. Here again the sower is the Son of Man; but the seed in this case is not so much the "word," as the Christian society, the Church, which forms, so to speak, the firstfruits of the word. As it then was, even as it was on the day of Pentecost, it was smaller than any sect or party in Palestine or Greece or Italy. It was sown in God's field of the world, but it was to grow till it became greater than any sect or school, a tree among the trees of the forest, a kingdom among other kingdoms (comp. the imagery of Ezek. xxxi. 3; Dan. iv. 10), a great organised society; and the "birds of the air" (no longer, as before, the emblems of evil)—*i.e.*, the systems of thought, institutions, and the like, of other races—were to find refuge under its protection. History has witnessed many fulfilments of the prophecy implied in the parable, and those who believe that the life of Christendom is an abiding life will look for yet more.

(32) **The least of all seeds.**—The description is, of course, popular, and need not be pressed with microscopical exactness.

**The greatest among herbs.** — More literally, *greater than the herbs*—*i.e.*, belonging to a higher order of vegetation.

(33) **The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven.**—The parable sets forth the working of the Church of Christ on the world, but not in the same way as that of the Mustard Seed. There the growth was outward, measured by the extension of the Church, dependent on its missionary efforts. Here the working is from within. The "leaven"—commonly, as in the Passover ritual, the symbol of malice and wickedness (1 Cor. v. 8)—causing an action in the flour with which it is mingled that is of the nature of decay and tends to actual putrescence, here becomes, in the mode of teaching which does not confine itself within the limits of a traditional and conventional symbolism, the type of influence for good as well as evil. It can turn the flour into human food—this symbolism is traceable in the leavened loaves that were offered on the day of Pentecost (Lev. xxiii. 17)—can permeate the manners, feelings, and opinions of non-Christian societies until they become blessings and not curses to mankind. In the new feelings, gradually diffused, of Christendom as to slavery, prostitution, gladiatorial games—in the new reverence for childhood and womanhood, for poverty and sickness—we may trace the working of the leaven.

Descending to the details of the parable, it is at least open to us (as an application of it, if not as an interpretation) to see in the woman, as in the parable of the Lost Piece of Money (Luke xv. 8), the representative of the divine Wisdom as working in the history of the world, or of the Church of Christ as embodying that wisdom. The *three* measures of meal admit, in like manner, of many references, of which we cannot say with certainty that one is more likely to have been intended than another. The descendants of the three sons of Noah, or the Jew, the Greek, the Barbarian, as representing the whole race of mankind, or body, soul, and spirit, as the three parts of man's nature, which the new truth is to permeate and purify, are all in this sense equally legitimate applications.

(34) **Without a parable spake he not unto them.**—The words are, of course, limited by the

he not unto them: (35) that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables;[a] I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world. (36) Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. (37) He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; (38) the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one;* (39) the enemy that sowed them is the

[a] Ps. 78. 2.

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context to this occasion, but it is noticeable from this time forward that parables are the dominant element in His teaching to the multitude, and that the mysteries of the kingdom are reserved for the more esoteric instruction of the disciples.

(35) **I will open my mouth in parables.**—The quotation illustrates, much in the same way as those in viii. 17, xii. 17, St. Matthew's peculiar way of dealing with the prophetic language of the Old Testament. He found the word "parable" at the opening of a Psalm (Ps. lxxviii. 2). The Psalm itself was in no sense predictive, but simply an historical survey of God's dealings with Israel from the days of the Exodus to those of David. But the occurrence of the word was enough for him. Here was One whose form of teaching answered to that which the Psalmist had described, who might claim the Psalmist's words as His own; and excluding, as he did, the idea of chance from all such coincidences, he could use even here the familiar formula, "that it might be fulfilled."

A remarkable various-reading gives, "by Esaias the prophet." It is found in the Sinaitic MS., and had been used before the time of Jerome by a heathen writer (Porphyry) as a proof of St. Matthew's ignorance. Old as it is, however, there is no reason for receiving it as the original reading. The mistake was probably that of a transcriber, misled by the word "prophet," and writing the name after the precedent of viii. 17, xii. 17. If the mistake had been St. Matthew's, it would stand on the same footing as the substitution of Jeremiah for Zechariah in xxvii. 9. The Psalm is assigned by the superscription to the authorship of Asaph.

(36) **Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.**—The question was asked privately, probably in the house of Peter, to which our Lord had retired with the disciples after the listening crowd upon the beach had been dismissed. It implies that the disciples had thought over the parable, and had found it harder to understand than those of the Mustard-seed and the Leaven.

(37) **He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man.**—Primarily, we must remember that the parable refers to the kingdom of heaven—*i.e.*, to that new order of things which the Christ came to establish, and which is conveniently described as the Church which owns Him as its Lord. It offers, accordingly, an explanation of the presence of evil in that Church, and only by inference and analogy does it bear upon the wider problem of the origin of the evil in the world at large. That analogy, however, is not likely to mislead us. If the Son of Man has been "the Light that lighteth every man" (John i. 9), then He had been a sower of the good seed in the wider region of the world from the beginning, and then also all who followed after righteousness had been children of the kingdom.

(38) **The tares are the children of the wicked one.**—It was, perhaps, natural that theologians, who saw in heresy the greatest of all evils, should identify the tares with heretics. So far as heresy rises from the spirit of self-will, or antagonism to righteousness, we may admit that they are included in the class, but the true definition is that given in verse 41, "all things that offend, and them which do iniquity."

(39) **The enemy that sowed them is the devil.**—Here, as in the parable of the Sower, there is the most distinct recognition of a personal power of evil, the enemy of God thwarting His work. It will be noticed that our Lord, as if training His disciples gradually in the art of the interpreter, gives rather the heads of an explanation of the parable than one that enters fully into details; and it is therefore open to us, as it was to them, to pause and ask what was taught by that which seems almost the most striking and most important part of the parable. Who were the servants? What was meant by their question, and the answer of the householder? The answers under these heads supply, it will be seen, a solution of many problems in the history and policy of the Church of Christ. (1.) The enemy sowed the tares "while men slept." The time of danger for the Church is one of apparent security. Men cease to watch. Errors grow up and develop into heresies, carelessness passes into license, and offences abound. (2.) The "servants" are obviously distinct from the "reapers," and represent the zealous pastors of the Church. Their first impulse is to clear the kingdom from evil by extirpating the doers of the evil. But the householder in the parable is at once more patient and more discerning than they. To seek for the ideal of a perfect Church in that way may lead to worse evils than those it attempts to remedy. True wisdom is found, for the most part, in what might seem the policy of indifference, "Let both grow together until the harvest." That is the broad, salient lesson of the parable. At first it may seem at variance with what enters into our primary conceptions, alike of ecclesiastical discipline and of the duty of civil rulers. Is it not the work of both to root out the tares, to punish evil-doers? The solution of the difficulty is found, as it were, in reading "between the lines" of the parable. Doubtless, evil is to be checked and punished alike in the Church and in civil society, but it is not the work of the rulers of either to extirpate the doers. Below the surface there lies the latent truth that, by a spiritual transmutation which was not possible in the natural framework of the parable, the tares may become the wheat. There is no absolute line of demarcation separating one from the other till the time of harvest. What the parable condemns, therefore, is the over-hasty endeavour to attain an ideal perfection, the zeal of the founders of religious orders, of Puritanism in its many forms. It would have been well if those who identify the tares with heretics had been more mindful of the lesson which that identification suggests.

**The harvest is the end of the world.**—Strictly speaking, *the end of the age*—*i.e.*, of the period that precedes the "coming" of the Son of Man as Judge, which is to usher in the "world," or the "age," to come.

devil; the harvest is the end of the world;[a] and the reapers are the angels. (40) As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. (41) The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things[1] that offend, and them which do iniquity; (42) and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. (43) Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.[b] Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

(44) Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

(45) Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking

[a] Joel 3. 13. Rev. 14. 15.

[b] Dan. 12. 3.

[1] Or, *scandals.*

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**The reapers are the angels.**—What will be the actual work of the ministry of angels in the final judgment it is not easy to define, but their presence is implied in all our Lord's greater prophetic utterances about it (Matt. xxv. 31). That ministry had been brought prominently before men in the apocalyptic visions of the Book of Daniel, in which for the first time the name of the Son of Man is identified with the future Christ (vii. 13), and the Messianic kingdom itself brought into new distinctness in connection with a final judgment. Our Lord's teaching does but expand the hints of the "thousand times ten thousand" that ministered before the Ancient of Days when the books were opened (Dan. vii. 9, 10), and of Michael the prince as connected with the resurrection of "many that sleep in the dust of the earth" (Dan. xii. 1, 2).

(41) **His angels . . . his kingdom.**—The vision of One who stood before men outwardly as the carpenter's son stretches forward to the far future, and sees that the angels of God and the kingdom are alike His.

**All things that offend.**—Literally, *all stumbling-blocks;* the word being explained by the clause that follows as including all that work iniquity. It lies in the nature of the case that the interpretation should recognise only the great broad divisions of good and evil, leaving the apportionment of rewards and punishments, according to the varying degrees of each, to be filled into the outline afterwards.

(42) **Into a furnace of fire.**—Better, *the furnace—i.e.,* that of Gehenna, in which there will be "*the* wailing and gnashing of teeth." (See Notes on viii. 12.)

(43) **Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun.**—The imagery is so natural that we hardly need to look for any reference to older teaching, yet we can hardly help remembering the path of the just that "shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. iv. 18), and yet more, as connected more closely with the judgment to come, those "that shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. xii. 3). Yet the promise here has one crowning and supreme blessing: the kingdom in which the righteous shall thus shine forth is the kingdom of their Father.

(44) **The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field.**—Probably no parable in the whole series came more home to the imagination of the disciples than this. Every village had its story of men who had become suddenly rich by finding some hidden hoard that had been hastily concealed in time of war or tumult. Then, as now, there were men who lived in the expectation of finding such treasures, and every traveller who was seen searching in the ruins of an ancient town was supposed to be hunting after them. As far back as the days of Solomon such a search had become a parable for the eager pursuit of wisdom (Prov. ii. 4). Now they were told to find that which answered to it in their own experience. The conduct of the man who finds the treasure, in concealing the fact of his discovery from the owner of the field, hardly corresponds with our notions of integrity, but parables—as in the case of the Unjust Steward (Luke xvi. 1) and the Unjust Judge (Luke xviii. 2)—do not concern themselves with these questions, and it is enough if they bring out the salient points—in this case, the eagerness of the man to obtain the treasure, and the sacrifice he is ready to make for it. Jewish casuistry, in such matters, applied the maxim, *Caveat emptor*, to the seller rather than the buyer, and the minds of the disciples would hardly be shocked at what would seem to them a natural stroke of sharpness.

In the interpretation of the parable, the case described is that of a man who, not having started in the pursuit of holiness or truth, is brought by the seeming accidents of life—a chance meeting, a word spoken in season, the example of a living holiness—to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, *i.e.,* to Christ Himself, and who, finding in Him a peace and joy above all earthly treasure, is ready to sacrifice the lower wealth in order to obtain the higher. Such, we may well believe, had been the history of the publicans and the fishermen who made up the company of the Twelve. The parable had its fulfilment in them when they, at the bidding of their Lord, "forsook all and followed Him." Such, it need hardly be said, has been the story of thousands of the saints of God in every age of the Church's life from that day to this.

(45) **Like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls.**—Here again the illustration would commend itself to the thoughts of the fishermen of Galilee. The caprices of luxury in the Roman empire had given a prominence to pearls, as an article of commerce, which they had never had before, and have probably never had since. They, rather than emeralds and sapphires, were the typical instance of all costliest adornments (vii. 6; 1 Tim. ii. 9). The story of Cleopatra, the fact that the opening of a new pearl-market was one of the alleged motives which led the Emperor Claudius to invade Britain, are indications of the value that was then set on the "goodly pearls" of the parable. Such a merchant seeking them, either on the shores of the Mediterranean, or as brought by *caravans* to other traders from the Persian Gulf or the Indian Ocean, must have been a familiar presence to the fishermen of Capernaum. The parable in its spiritual bearing, has, of course, much that is common with the preceding. But there is this marked and suggestive difference. The "search" is presupposed. The man has been seeking the "goodly pearls" of

goodly pearls: (46) who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

(47) Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: (48) which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. (49) So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, (50) and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. (51) Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord. (52) Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe *which is* instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure *things* new and old.

(53) And it came to pass, *that* when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence. (54) And when he was

wisdom, holiness, and truth, and has found them in at least some of their lower forms. Then he is led to the higher knowledge of communion with the life of Christ, and for that is content to resign all that he had before prized most highly. Such, in the records of the New Testament, was the history of St. Paul when he counted "all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord" (Phil. iii. 8). Such, in after days, was the history of Justin Martyr and Augustine. Such, in our own time, has been that of many noble and true-hearted seekers after truth and holiness. Such will evermore be the history of those who are faithful in a very little, and who, "willing to do the will of God, shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God" (John vii. 17).

(47) **The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net.**—The net in this case is not the hand-net of iv. 18, but the *sagenè*, or great drag-net, which drew in a larger haul of fishes. The day's teaching in the method of parables ends, as it were, in an easy lesson, which the former experience of the disciples would enable them to understand. Still, as in the parable of the Tares, the main thoughts are, (1) the mingling of the evil with the good in the visible kingdom of Christ on earth, and (2) the ultimate separation of the two, that each may receive according to the divine law of retribution. Here, as there, the parable perforce passes over the fact that in the actual work of the kingdom the very casting of the net may change, and is meant to change, the nature of the fish that are taken in its meshes, and, therefore, that those that remain "bad" are so in the end by the result of their own will.

(51) **Have ye understood all these things?**—The verb is the same as that used in the parable of the Sower. An intellectual apprehension of the truth, which is also spiritual, is the condition of the growth in wisdom which enables the disciple to become in due course a teacher. There was doubtless in the answer of the disciples a grateful consciousness of a rapid increase in knowledge and insight. There was also a certain child-like *naïveté* in the readiness with which they declared their conviction that they had mastered all the mysteries of the kingdom which had been veiled beneath the symbolism of these earthly similitudes.

(52) **Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven.**—The verse is interesting as one of the very few passages in which our Lord compares His own work and that of the Apostles after Him to that of the scribes of the Jewish schools. That He was so regarded during His ministry—that men thought of Him as a Rabbi, no less than as a Prophet, or as the Christ—is clear from the facts that He was called by that name (or its equivalent, Master, or Teacher) both by His disciples and by others; that He assumed the office of a scribe, as interpreting the scriptures in the Sabbath services (Luke iv. 16); that He questioned with the scribes after their own manner ("Have ye never read?" xii. 3; xix. 4; xxi. 16, *et al.*) and as one of their order. And now He was training the disciples, "unlearned" as they were, to be His successors in that office. They too were sitting at the feet of a Gamaliel—of One greater than Gamaliel. But His method of training was altogether of another kind than that of the Masters of the Schools. It consisted, not in minute comments on the words of the Law, not in the subtleties of an intricate and often revolting casuistry, not in puerile and fantastic legends, but rather in the eternal laws of His Father's kingdom, and the manifold parables of those laws in the visible universe; in this way it was that He was educating them to be scribes of the kingdom of heaven.

**Things new and old.**—Our Lord's own teaching was, of course, the highest example of this union. There were the old eternal laws of righteousness, the proclamation of the true meaning of all that every true teacher had included in the idea of duty and religion, but there were also new truths, such as His own mission as the Head of the divine kingdom and the future Judge of all men, and the work of the Spirit as regenerating and sanctifying. As the years passed, and new facts, such as the Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension, supplied the ground-work for new doctrines, these also took their place in the store-house of the well-instructed scribe. But the words applied also to the manner no less than to the substance of the teaching. Now the old familiar words of Lawgiver and Psalmist, now the gracious words such as man had never heard till then, now illustrations freely drawn, in proverbs or parable, from the world of nature or of men—these too were part of the treasure of the scribe. In that union the scribe of later times, every true teacher of the minds and hearts of men, may find the secret at once of reverence for the past and of courage for the future. So long as they bring forth out of their treasures "things new and old," we may hope that religious conservatism will be more than the "froward retention" of a custom or a formula, and religious progress more than a reckless love of novelty for the sake of its newness.

(54) **When he was come into his own country.**—The visit to Nazareth, here recorded in almost identical terms with Mark vi. 1—6, has so many points of resemblance with the narrative of Luke iv. 16—31 that many critics have supposed it to be a less complete account of the same fact. On this assumption,

come into his own country,[a] he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this *man* this wisdom, and *these* mighty works? (55) Is not this the carpenter's son?[b] is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? (56) And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this *man* all these things? (57) And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour,[c] save in his own country, and in his own house. (58) And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

CHAPTER XIV.—(1) At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of

[a] Mark 6. 1; Luke 4. 16.

[c] Mark 6. 4; Luke 4. 24; John 4. 44.

[b] John 6. 42.

A.D. 32. beginning.

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the narrative must be misplaced in its relation to other facts in one or other of the Gospels. A dislocation of some kind must indeed be admitted in any case, as St. Mark places it after the resurrection of Jairus's daughter, and makes that event follow the cure of the Gadarene demoniac, and places that on the next day after the first use of parables. We are compelled to admit, as before in the Notes on viii. 1, the almost entire absence of any trustworthy notes of chronological sequence, beyond the grouping, in some cases, of a few conspicuous facts. In comparing, however, St. Matthew and St. Mark with St. Luke, there seems no sufficient ground for hastily assuming identity. The third Gospel places the visit which it narrates, at the very beginning of our Lord's work, and as giving the reason of His removal to Capernaum. Here, there is no outburst of violent enmity such as we find there, but simple amazement. It seems, therefore, more probable that we have here a short account (short and imperfect, it may be, because our Lord went without His disciples) of another effort to bring the men of Nazareth to acknowledge Him, if not as the Christ, at least as a Prophet. The circumstances of the case in St. Matthew's record suggest another motive as, at least, possible. He had recently, as in xii. 48, when His mother and His brethren had come in their eager anxiety to interrupt His work, spoken in words that seemed to repel them to a distance from Him. What if this visit were meant to show that, though as a Prophet He could not brook that interruption, home affections were not dead in Him, that His heart still yearned over His brethren and His townsmen, and that He sought to raise them to a higher life? On comparing the account here with that in St. Luke, it would seem almost certain that there was now a less direct assertion of His claims as the Christ than there had been before—a proclamation of the laws of the kingdom rather than of His own position in it. And so the impression is one of wonder at His wisdom, not of anger or scorn at what He claims to be.

(55) **Is not this the carpenter's son?**—In St. Mark, the question appears in the form, "Is not this the carpenter?" and it is, of course, in the nature of things probable that He both helped in the workshop during Joseph's life, and assisted the "brethren" to carry on the work after his death. Justin Martyr (*Dial. c. Tryph.* c. 88) relates that in his time articles said to have been made by Him, such as rakes and harrows, were in demand as relics. The apocryphal *Gospel of the Infancy*, after its manner, makes Him instruct Joseph when he was bungling at his work.

**And his brethren.**—See Note on xii. 46.

**Joses.**—The authority of MSS. is in favour of the reading, "Joseph." It was, of course, probable that the name of the father should be borne by one of those who were in some sense his children. Joses, however, was probably but a softened form of the same name.

(57) **They were offended in him.**—The word is used in the same sense as in xi. 6. They could not reconcile the new wisdom and the claim which the teaching implied with the obscurity and commonness of the earlier life, and so they did not believe.

**A prophet is not without honour . . .**—The words in St. Mark include "among his kindred." The proverb seems to have been one often on our Lord's lips, and obviously tells of a prolonged experience of indifference and unbelief in all their many forms. In John iv. 44, it appears, in a context which presents some difficulty, as giving the reason why our Lord, on leaving Judæa, went into Galilee.

(58) **He did not many mighty works there.**—In St. Mark the language is stronger, "He *could* do no mighty works there." The wonder-working power was not absolute and unconditioned, but depended on the faith of those who came to Him. Without that, the will and the power were alike thwarted. St. Mark adds, with more precision, that He "laid His hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them."

### XIV.

(1) **Herod the tetrarch.**—The son of Herod the Great by Malthace. Under his father's will he succeeded to the government of Galilee and Peræa, with the title of Tetrarch, and as ruler of a fourth part of the Roman province of Syria. His first wife was a daughter of Aretas, an Arabian king or chief, named in 2 Cor. xi. 32 as king of the Damascenes. Herodias, the wife of his half-brother Philip (not the Tetrarch of Trachonitis, Luke iii. 1, but son of Herod the Great by Mariamne, and though wealthy, holding no official position as a ruler), was daughter of Aristobulus, the son whom Herod put to death, and was therefore niece to both her husbands. Prompted partly by passion, partly by ambition, she left Philip, and became the wife of Antipas (Jos. *Ant.* xviii. 5, § 4). The marriage, at once adulterous and by the Mosaic law doubly incestuous, shocked the conscience of all the stricter Jews. It involved Antipas in a war with the father of the wife whom he had divorced and dismissed, and it was probably in connection with this war that we read of soldiers on actual duty as coming under the teaching of the Baptist in Luke iii. 14. The prophetic spirit of the Baptist, the very spirit of Elijah in his dealings with Ahab and Jezebel, made him the spokesman of the general feeling, and so brought him within the range of the vindictive bitterness of the guilty queen.

**Heard of the fame of Jesus.**—The words do not necessarily imply that no tidings had reached him till now. Our Lord's ministry, however, had been at this time at the furthest not longer than a year, and possibly less, and Antipas, residing at Tiberias and surrounded

Jesus,[a] (2) and said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.[1]

(3) For Herod had laid hold on John,[b] and bound him, and put *him* in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife. (4) For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.[c] (5) And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.[d] (6) But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod. (7) Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. (8) And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger. (9) And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat,

[a] Mark 6. 14; Luke 9. 7.

[d] ch. 21. 26.

[1] Or, *are wrought by him.*

A.D. 30.

[b] Luke 3. 19.

[c] Lev. 18 16; and 20. 21.

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by courtiers, might well be slow to hear of the works and teaching of the Prophet of Nazareth. Possibly, the nobleman of Capernaum (John iv. 46), or Manaen the foster-brother of the tetrarch (Acts xiii. 1), or Chuza his steward (Luke viii. 3), may have been among his first informants, as "the servants" (the word is not that used for "slaves") to whom he now communicated his theory as to the reported wonders.

(2) **This is John the Baptist.**—In xvi. 14, Luke ix. 7—9, this is given as one of the three opinions that were floating among the people as to our Lord's character, the other two being, (1) that He was Elijah, and (2) that He was one of the old prophets who had risen again. The policy of the tetrarch connected him with the Sadducean priestly party rather than with the more popular and rigid Pharisees, and a comparison of xvi. 6 with Mark viii. 15 at least suggests the identity of the "leaven of Herod" with that of the Sadducees. On this supposition, his acceptance of the first of the three rumours is every way remarkable. The superstitious terror of a conscience stained with guilt is stronger than his scepticism as a Sadducee, even though there mingled with it, as was probable enough, the wider unbelief of Roman epicureanism. To him the new Prophet, working signs and wonders which John had never worked, was but the re-appearance of the man whom he had murdered. It was more than a spectre from the unseen world, more than the metempsychosis of the soul of John into another body. It was nothing less than John himself.

(3) **Put him in prison.**—Josephus (*Ant.* xviii. 5, § 2) gives Machærus, in Peræa, as the scene of the imprisonment and death of the Baptist.

(4) **For John said unto him.**—The Jewish historian (*Ant.* xviii. 5, § 2) states more generally that Antipas was afraid lest some popular outbreak should be the result of the preaching of the Baptist, working on the excitable peasantry of Galilee.

(5) **He feared the multitude.**—St. Mark, whose narrative is here much the fullest of the three, adds that Herod himself "feared John," knowing "him to be a just man and a holy," and was much perplexed—this, rather than "did many things" is the true reading—and heard him gladly (Mark vi. 20). There was yet a struggle of conscience against passion in the weak and wicked tetrarch, as there was in Ahab in his relations with Elijah. In Herodias, as in Jezebel, there was no halting between two opinions, and she, in the bitterness of her hate, thirsted for the blood of the prophet who had dared to rebuke her guilt.

(6) **Herod's birthday.**—Some critics have looked on the feast as one commemorating Herod's accession—his birth-day as a ruler; but there seems no reason for not accepting the word in its simple natural sense. Such feasts were common enough in the imperial life at Rome, and that of Herod's birthday had become proverbial even there (Persius, *Sat.* v., l. 180).

**The daughter of Herodias danced before them.**—Dances in filmy garments that but half concealed the form, commonly of an impure or voluptuous nature, were common enough both at Eastern and Roman banquets, the guests being simply spectators. But the dancers were for the most part women who made it their calling, like the nautch-girls of India; and it was a new thing, at which every decent Jew would shudder, for the daughter of a kingly house to come thus into a shameless publicity and expose herself to the gaze of the banqueters, including as they did the chief captains and chiliarchs of the Roman legions, as well as Herod's own courtiers and the chief men of the province (Mark vi. 21). But Herodias, it would seem, knew the tetrarch's weak point as well as Madame du Barry knew that of Louis XV. of France, and sought to bend him to her will, even though it were by the sacrifice of her daughter's modesty. She danced before them—literally, *in the midst of them*—as they reclined on their couches indolently gazing. Her name is given by Josephus (*Ant.* xviii. 5, § 4) as Salome.

(7) **He promised with an oath.**—The scandalous chronicles of the time were not without stories of extravagant rewards paid to mimes and dancers, and Herod might fancy that in this also he was reproducing the magnificence of the imperial court at Rome. But he probably hardly expected "the half of his kingdom" (Mark vi. 23) as the "whatsoever thou shalt ask." A jewel, a bracelet, a palace, or a city, were probably in his thoughts as what she was likely to ask and he would gladly give.

(8) **Being before instructed of her mother.**—Better, *being prompted, or instigated.* The word does not imply that the girl had been instructed before she danced what to ask for, and St. Mark distinctly states (vi. 24) that she went out from the banquet-hall to ask her mother what use she was to make of the tetrarch's promise. The mother's absence shows that the supper was one for men only, and that it was among them, flushed as they were with wine, that the daughter had appeared in reckless disregard of all maiden modesty.

(9) **The king was sorry.**—It was the last struggle of conscience. In that moment there must have come before his mind his past reverence for the prophet, the joy which had for a time accompanied the strivings of a better life, possibly the counsels of his foster-brother Manaen. Had there been only the personal influence of Herodias these might have prevailed against it, but, like most weak men, Herod feared to be thought weak. It was not so much his regard for the oath which he had taken (that, had it been taken in secret, he might have got over), but his shrinking from the taunt, or whispered jest, or contemptuous gesture of the

he commanded *it* to be given *her*. (10) And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison. (11) And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought *it* to her mother. (12) And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

(13) When Jesus heard *of it*,[a] he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard *thereof*, they followed him on foot out of the cities. (14) And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.

(15) And when it was evening,[b] his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may

[b] Mark 6. 35; John 6. 5.

A.D. 32.

[a] Mark 6. 32; Luke 9. 10.

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assembled guests, if they should see him draw back from his plighted word. A false regard for public opinion, for what people will say or think of us in our own narrow circle, was in this, as in so many other instances, an incentive to guilt instead of a restraint.

(10) **He sent, and beheaded John in the prison.**—Measured by the standard of earthly greatness, it seems almost like a paradox to say of one who had only been for a few short months a preacher of righteousness in the wilderness of Judæa, as men have said of the kings and conquerors of the world, "So passed from the earth one of the greatest of her sons;" and yet this, and nothing less than this, if we accept our Lord's words, must be our estimate of the Baptist's character. Intensity of purpose, dauntless courage, profound humility, self-denial carried to its highest point, a burning love that passed beyond the limits of race and nation, tenderness of sympathy for the toilers of the world, for the fallen and the outcast, all these were there; and what elements of moral greatness can go beyond them? And the consciousness of Christendom has recognised that greatness. Art and poetry have symbolised it in outward form, and the work of the Forerunner, the conviction that the preaching of repentance must precede that of forgiveness, has been reproduced in every great revival of religious life which has brought the kingdom of heaven nearer to men's hearts and hopes.

(11) **She brought it to her mother.**—A glance at the after-history of those who were accomplices in the deed of blood will not be out of place. Shortly after the new society, for which John had prepared the way, had started upon its great career, when her brother, the young Agrippa, had obtained the title of king, through the favour of Caligula, Herodias, consistent in her ambition, stirred up her husband to seek the same honour. With this view she accompanied him to Rome; but they were followed by complaints from the oppressed Galileans, and the result was that he was deposed from his tetrarchy, and banished to Lugdunum (the modern Lyons) in Gaul. Thither she accompanied him, faithful to his fallen fortunes, in spite of overtures from her brother to return to Judæa, and there they died (Jos. *Ant.* xviii. 7, § 2). A tradition or legend relates that Salome's death was retributive in its outward form. She fell upon the ice, and in the fall her head was severed from the body. Josephus, however, simply records the fact that she married first her great-uncle Philip, the Tetrarch of Trachonitis, and afterwards her first cousin, Aristobulus (*Ant.* xviii. 5, § 4).

(12) **His disciples came.**—Among those who thus transferred their allegiance to their true Lord were, we must believe, the two whom John had sent to Him from his prison. From this time they probably ceased in Judæa to be a distinct community, though, as the instances of Apollos (Acts xviii. 25) and the disciples at Ephesus (Acts xix. 3) show, they still maintained a separate existence in the more distant regions to which the influence of the Baptist had indirectly penetrated.

(13) **When Jesus heard of it.**—We may, I think, reverently trace as the motives of this withdrawal, (1) the strong personal emotion which the death of one whom Jesus had known and loved could not fail to cause, and (2) the wish to avoid being the centre of the popular excitement which the death of John was likely to cause, and which we know, as a matter of fact (Jos. *Ant.* xviii. 5, § 2), was so strong that men looked on all the subsequent troubles of Antipas and his wife as a retributive judgment for it. This was, indeed, sufficiently shown by the eagerness with which the people followed Him into His retirement. Two other circumstances, named by the other Evangelists, tended to increase the crowd that thronged around Him. (1) The Twelve had just returned from their missionary circuit (Mark vi. 30, 31; Luke ix. 10), and it was, indeed, partly to give them, too, an interval of repose that He thus withdrew from His public work; and (2) the Passover was coming on (John vi. 4), and all the roads of Galilee were thronged with companies of pilgrims hastening to keep the feast at Jerusalem.

**Into a desert place.**—St. Luke names this as "a city called Bethsaida," *i.e.*, one of the two towns bearing that name on the coast of the Sea of Galilee. The name (which signified House of Fish=Fish-town) was a natural one for villages so placed, and the topography of all countries, our own included, presents too many instances of two or more places bearing the same name, with some distinctive epithet, to make the fact at all strange here. In St. Mark's account the disciples sail, after the feeding of the five thousand, to the other Bethsaida (Mark vi. 45); and as this appears in John vi. 17 to have been in the direction of Capernaum, the scene of the miracle must have been Bethsaida-Julias, on the north-east shore of the lake.

(14) **And Jesus went forth.**—The words imply that our Lord, from the height to which He had withdrawn, saw the crowds drawing near, and then, instead of retiring still further, went forward, moved by the touch of pity which the sight of an eager and suffering multitude never failed to rouse in Him (ix. 36), to meet them and relieve their sufferings. St. Mark (vi. 34) adds that the source of His compassion was (as in Matt. ix. 36) that they were as sheep having no shepherd.

(15) **And when it was evening.**—The narrative that follows is, in many ways, one of the most important in the Gospel narratives. (1.) It is the only miracle recorded by all the four Evangelists, and thus is practically one of the chief data for interweaving the supplemental narrative of St. John with that of the other three. (2.) It was the fullest manifestation of the sovereignty of the Son of Man over the world of nature. The act was distinctly, if we accept the facts

go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. (16) But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. (17) And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. (18) He said, Bring them hither to me. (19) And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to *his* disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. (20) And they did all eat and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. (21) And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.

of the case, one of creative power, and does not admit, as some of the works of healing might seem to do, of being explained away as the result of strong faith or excited imagination on the part of those who were its objects. The only rationalising explanation which has ever been offered—viz., that our Lord by His example, in offering the five loaves and the two fishes for the use of others than His own company of the Twelve, stirred the multitude to bring out the little store which, till then, each man in his selfish anxiety had kept concealed—is ludicrously inadequate. The narrative must be accepted or rejected as a whole; and if accepted, it is, as we have said, a proof of supernatural, if not absolutely of divine, power. (3.) No narrative of any other miracle offers so many marks of naturalness, both in the vividness of colouring with which it is told, and the coincidences, manifestly without design, which it presents to us. It is hardly possible to imagine four independent writers—independent, even if two of them were derived from a common source—reproducing, in this way, a mere legend. (4.) The nature of this evidence will be seen in all its strength by combining the facts of the four records as we proceed. (5.) The miracle was important, as we see from John vi., on account of its dogmatic symbolism. It became the text of the dialogue at Capernaum in which (not to anticipate the Notes on the fourth Gospel) communion with the life of Christ was shadowed forth under the figure of eating the flesh of Him who is the true Bread from heaven.

**His disciples came to him.**—In St. John's narrative, Philip and Andrew are prominent as speakers, and our Lord puts to the former the question, "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" As Philip and Andrew both belonged to one of the Bethsaidas, their local knowledge made the question natural. It was apparently after this private conversation that the main body of the disciples came to their Master beseeching Him to dismiss the multitude that they might buy food in the nearest villages. They were met by what must have seemed to them the marvellous calmness of the answer: "They need not depart, give ye them to eat." Philip's rough estimate having been passed on to the others, they answer that it would take two hundred pennyworth of bread (the Roman penny, as a coin, was worth 7½*d.* of our money, but its value is better measured by its being the average day's wages of a soldier or labourer, xx. 2) to feed so great a number (Mark vi. 37; John vi. 7). Then Jesus asks them, "How many loaves have ye?" and Andrew (John vi. 8), as the spokesman of the others, replies that they have found a lad with five loaves (barley loaves, in St. John, the food of the poor) and two fishes.

(19) **He commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass.**—This, too, was done with a calm and orderly precision. They were to sit down in companies of fifty or a hundred each, and thus the number of those who were fed became a matter of easy calculation. St. Mark, with a vivid picturesqueness, describes them as presenting the appearance of so many beds of flowers in a well-ordered garden. The bright colours of Eastern dress probably made the resemblance more striking than it would be with a like multitude so arranged among ourselves.

**Looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake.**—The act was natural and simple enough, the "saying grace" (St. John uses the word, "giving thanks") of the head of a Jewish household as he gathered his family around him. The formulæ in such cases were commonly short and simple, like our own, such *e.g.* as, "May God, the ever-blessed One, bless what He has given us." Looking, however, to the teaching which followed the miracle, as in John vi., and to our Lord's subsequent use at the Last Supper of the same words and acts, with others which gave them a new and higher meaning, we can hardly be wrong in thinking that as He now distributed the earthly bread to the hungering crowd, through the agency of His Apostles, there was present to His mind the thought that hereafter He would, through the same instrumentality, impart to souls that hungered after righteousness the gift of communion with Himself, that thus they might feed on the true Bread that cometh down from heaven.

It lies in the nature of the case, as a miracle of the highest order, that the process of multiplication is inconceivable in its details. Did each loaf, in succession, supply a thousand with food, and then come to an end, its place taken by another? Was the structure of the fishes, bone and skin and head, reproduced in each portion that was given to the guests at that great feast? We know not, and the Evangelists did not care to ask or to record. It was enough for them that the multitude "did all eat, and were filled."

(20) **Twelve baskets full.**—The basket here is the *cophinus*, a small basket carried in the hand, and often used by travellers to hold their food. So Juvenal (*Sat.* iii. 14) describes the Jews of Italy as travelling with "their *cophinus* and a wisp of hay," by way of pillow, as their only luggage. St. John records that the gathering was made by our Lord's express commands, "that nothing be lost." The marvellous display of creative power was not to supersede forethought, thrift, economy in the use of the gifts it had bestowed. It is probable, from the language of the disciples in Mark vi. 37, and from John xiii. 29, that they were in the habit of distributing food to the poor in the villages and towns in which they preached, and the fragments were, we may believe, reserved for that use.

(21) **Beside women and children.**—St. Matthew is the only Evangelist who mentions their presence, but all the four use the word which emphasises the fact that all the five thousand were *men*. As the crowd had come in many cases from considerable distances, the women and children were probably few in number.

(22) And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. (23) And when he had sent the multitudes away,[a] he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come,[b] he was there alone. (24) But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. (25) And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. (26) And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. (27) But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. (28) And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. (29) And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. (30) But when

[a] Mark 6. 46.

[b] John 6. 16.

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were grouped together by themselves, and were not counted, so that the round number dwelt in men's minds without reference to them.

(22) **Straightway Jesus constrained his disciples.**—St. John narrates more fully the impression made by the miracle. It led those who witnessed it to the conclusion that "this was the Prophet that should come into the world." They sought to seize Him and make Him a king against His will (John vi. 14, 15), and He, shrinking from that form of sovereignty, withdrew from His disciples, dismissed the multitude, and on the mountain height passed the night in prayer. The disciples at His bidding were crossing to the other side to Bethsaida (Mark vi. 45)—*i.e.,* to the town of that name on the western shore of the lake near Capernaum (John vi. 17). It was, we may reverently say, as if in this unwonted stir of popular excitement—not against Him, but in His favour—this nearness to a path of earthly greatness instead of that which led onward to the cross, He saw something like a renewal of the temptation in the wilderness, needing special communion with His Father, that He might once again resist and overcome it. And once again, therefore, He desired to pass through the conflict alone, as afterwards in Gethsemane, with no human eye to witness the temptation or the victory.

(24) **Tossed with waves.**—Literally, *vexed,* or *tormented.*

(25) **In the fourth watch of the night.**—The Jews, since their conquest by Pompeius, had adopted the Roman division of the night into four watches, and this was accordingly between 3 A.M. and 6 A.M., in the dimness of the early dawn. St. John adds, as if from a personal reminiscence, and as guarding against explanations that would minimise the miracle (such as that our Lord was seen on the shore, or was swimming to the boat), that they were about twenty-five or thirty furlongs from the point from which they had started—*i.e.,* as the lake was five miles wide, nearly three-fourths of the way across.

**Walking on the sea.**—Here, again, we have to choose between the simple acceptance of the supernatural fact as another instance of His sovereignty, or rejecting it as a legend. On the former supposition, we may see in it something like an anticipation (not unconnected, it may be, with the intensity of that crisis in His life) of that spiritual body of which we see another manifestation in the Transfiguration, and which became normal after the Resurrection, reaching its completeness in the wonder of the Ascension. We speculate almost involuntarily on the nature, and, as it were, process of the miracle, asking whether the ordinary laws that govern motion were broken or suspended, or counteracted by higher laws. No such questions would seem to have suggested themselves to the disciples. They, as yet not free from the popular superstitions of their countrymen, thought that it was "a spirit" (better, *a phantom,* or *spectre*) taking the familiar form, it might be, to lure them to their destruction, or as a token that some sudden mischance had deprived them of that loved Presence, and, therefore, in their vague terror, they were troubled, and cried out for fear.

(27) **Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.**—The accuracy with which the words are given by St. John, as well as by St. Matthew and St. Mark, shows the impression which the incident made on the minds of the disciples. To hear the familiar tones and the cheering words was enough, even amid the howling of the winds and the dashing of the waves, to give them confidence and hope. We can scarcely doubt that in after years that moment came back to their recollection, invested for them, as it has since been for the Church at large, with something of a symbolic character. Often the sky became dark, and the waves of the troublesome world were rough, and the blasts of persecution beat on them, and the ark of Christ's Church was tossed on the waters, and they were wearied and spent with rowing. They thought themselves abandoned, and then in the dim twilight they would see or feel once again the tokens of His presence. He was coming to them through the storm. "Be of good cheer" became the watchword of their lives.

(28, 29) **And Peter answered him.**—The incident that follows is narrated by St. Matthew only. It may have been one which the Apostle did not willingly recall, and which was therefore omitted by his disciple St. Mark and by his friend St. John, while St. Luke, writing as a compiler, came into the circle of those among whom it was seldom, if ever, mentioned. It is, however, eminently characteristic. Eager but not steadfast, daring and yet fearful, the Apostle is on that stormy night, as he was afterwards among the scoffs and questionings in the porch of the high priest's palace. "If it be Thou . . ." The voice, the form are not enough for him. It may yet, he thinks, be a spectre or a dream, and therefore he demands a sign. He, too, must walk upon the waters. And at first his faith sustains him. He is a sharer with his Master in that intensity of spiritual life which suspends the action of natural laws by one which is supernatural.

(30) **When he saw the wind boisterous.**—The adjective is wanting in the best MSS.

**He was afraid.**—In the conflict between sight and faith, faith was worsted, and with that came fear. The supernatural strength left him, and the swimmer's art would not now avail, and so the waters were closing over him, and he cried out in his agony. And then the he saw the wind boisterous,[1] he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. (31) And immediately Jesus stretched forth *his* hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? (32) And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. (33) Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

(34) And when they were gone over,[a] they came into the land of Gennesaret. (35) And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased; (36) and besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

CHAPTER XV.—(1) Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees,[b] which were of Jerusalem, saying, (2) Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. (3) But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of

[1] Or, *strong.*

A.D. 32.

[b] Mark 7. 1.

[a] Mark 6. 53.

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gracious pity of his Lord helped the "little faith" with the firm sustaining grasp, not, indeed, without a word of loving reproof, and yet as unwilling even here to quench the smoking flax.

(32) **The wind ceased.**—St. Mark adds that "they were above measure astonished" at the sudden lull. For the most part these mountain squalls died away gradually, and left the waves rough. Here the wind ceased in a moment, and ceased as their Lord entered the boat. And he gives a significant reason for their astonishment, "For they reflected not on the loaves, for their heart was hardened." This was the later analysis which the disciples made of their feelings on that night. Had they understood all the divine creative energy which the miracle of the loaves involved, nothing afterwards, not even the walking on the waves, or the lulling of the storm, would have seemed startling to them.

(33) **They that were in the ship.**—The peculiar description was apparently intended to distinguish them from Peter and the other disciples, and probably indicates that they were the crew of the boat, or some chance passengers, who had no previous knowledge of our Lord and of His works. They too were led, in that moment of wonder, to the confession that the Prophet of Nazareth was more than man, and in this, as far as the Gospel record goes, they anticipated the faith even of the foremost of the disciples. It is significant that Peter's confession that He was "the Son of God," or "the Holy One of God" (John vi. 69), follows shortly upon this.

(34) **They came into the land of Gennesaret.**—The name, possibly a corruption of the older Chinneroth (Num. xxxiv. 11; Josh. xi. 2; xii. 3), belonged to the western shore of the lake to which it gave one of its titles, and included Capernaum, to which, as we learn from John vi. 17, 24, the disciples were steering. The region was one of singular fertility (the name has been explained as meaning the "Garden of Sharon"), and was then one of the most populous districts of Palestine.

(35) **And when the men of that place.**—We have to remember, though not in this place to discuss, the fact that it was here, in the synagogue of Capernaum, that our Lord, meeting with those who had seen the miracle of the loaves, led them into that higher region of spiritual truth which the discourse of John vi. 22—65 brings before us. The manifestation of divine power in the works of healing coincided with the divine wisdom revealed in the new teaching.

(36) **That they might only touch the hem of his garment.**—The wide-spread belief may be noted as the natural result of the miracle already recorded in ix. 20—22, and as the touch implied the faith which was the condition of receptivity, it was now also, as before, effective.

### XV.

(1) **Scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem.**—The presence of these actors on the scene is every way significant. They had been prominent in like accusations. It was by them that our Lord had been accused of blasphemy in forgiving sins (ix. 3), of eating and drinking with publicans and sinners (ix. 11), of disregarding fasts (ix. 14), of casting out devils by Beelzebub (xii. 24), of Sabbath-breaking (xii. 2, 10). It was, we may believe, their presence in the synagogue of Capernaum which led our Lord to adopt (as in John vi. 26—65) a form of teaching so unlike the usual tenor of that of His Galilean ministry. And now they return to the charge again with a new and characteristic accusation.

(2) **They wash not their hands when they eat bread.**—St. Mark (vii. 3, 4), writing for Gentiles, explains the nature of the tradition more fully. What the Pharisees insisted on was not cleanliness as such, but the avoidance of ceremonial pollution. They shrank not from dirt, but from defilement. If they had been in the market, they might have come in contact with the heathen or the publican. If they ate or drank out of a metal or earthenware cup, the last lip that touched it might have been that of a heathen, and therefore that too needed purification. The pride which led them to stand aloof from the rest of mankind showed itself in this, as in all their other traditions. Indifference to their rules in peasants and fishermen, as such—as belonging to the crowd whom they scorned as the brute "people of the earth"—they could afford to tolerate. What shocked them was to see the disciples of One who claimed to be a Prophet or a Rabbi indulging in that indifference. According to their traditions, the act of which they complained stood on the same level as sexual impurity, and exposed those who were guilty of it to the excommunication of the Sanhedrin, or great Council.

(3) **By your tradition.**—Better, *for the sake of your tradition.* Our Lord's answer, it will be noted, is an indirect one, an *argumentum ad hominem.* He shows that their traditional casuistry was in direct opposition to the "commandment" of God, and the natural inference from that antagonism was that in

God by your tradition? (4) For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother:[a] and, He that curseth father or mother,[b] let him die the death. (5) But ye say, Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, *It is* a gift,[c] by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; (6) and honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free.* Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. (7) *Ye* hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, (8) This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth,[d] and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me. (9) But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.

(10) And he called the multitude,[e] and said unto them, Hear, and understand: (11) Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. (12) Then came his disciples, and said

d Isa. 29. 13.

a Ex. 20.12; Deut. 5 16

b Ex. 21. 17; Lev. 20. 9; Prov. 20. 20.

c Mark 7. 11, 12.

e Mark 7. 14.

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itself, apart from the commandment, it had no binding authority as a rule of life.

(4) **God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and thy mother.**—At first it might seem as if our Lord Himself, no less than the Pharisees, had taught men to think lightly of the commandment on which He now lays stress. He had called on men to forsake father and mother for the sake of the gospel (iv. 18, 22), and had excluded from discipleship those who loved father and mother more than they loved Him (x. 37). We need not close our eyes to the difficulty which thus presents itself. But the answer is not far to seek. In our Lord's teaching, a lower, natural duty was to give way exceptionally to a higher and supernatural one; otherwise it remained in full force. In that of the Pharisees the natural duty, enforced by a direct divine commandment, was made to give way to one which was purely human, arbitrary, and conventional. The two cases were not only not analogous, but stood on an entirely different footing.

(5) **It is a gift.**—St. Mark (vii. 11) gives the Hebrew term, Corban, which was literally applied to that which had been consecrated—theoretically to God, practically to the service or ornamentation of the Temple. In xxvii. 6, the treasury of the Temple is itself called the Corban. The casuistry of the scribes in this matter seems at first so monstrous that it would be hard to understand how it could have approved itself to any intelligent interpreters of the Law, were it not that the teaching of scholastic and Jesuit moralists presents instances, not less striking, of perverted ingenuity. The train of thought which led them to so startling a conclusion would seem to have been this: to divert to lower human uses that which has been consecrated to God is sacrilege, and therefore a man who turned all his property into a Corban was bound not to expend it on the support even of his nearest relations. But the time of fulfilling the vow of consecration was left to his own discretion, and no one had a right to call him to account for delay. With this loophole, the Corban practice became an easy method of evading natural obligations. It might be pleaded in bar of the claims of nearest relationship, and yet all the while the man might retain the usufruct of his property, and defer the fulfilment of his vow to the last hour of life. It would seem, indeed, that this casuistry went still further, and that the consecration might be only relative, as stopping the claims of this or that person, and expiring when they passed away.

(6) **He shall be free.**—The words, as the italics show, are not in the Greek, and if we follow the better reading, are not wanted to complete the sense. "Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, *he shall not honour* (*i.e., shall not support*) *his father or his mother.*" The "honour" which the commandment enjoined was identified with the duty which was its first and most natural expression.

**By your tradition.**—As before, *for the sake of.* They had inverted the right relation of the two, and made the tradition an end, and not a means. St. Mark (vii. 9) gives what we cannot describe otherwise than as a touch of grave and earnest irony, in the truest and best sense of that word, "Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own traditions."

(7) **Ye hypocrites.**—See Note on Matt. vii. 5.

(8) **This people draweth nigh unto me.**—The quotation is given substantially from the Greek version of Isaiah. We have already seen in xiii. 14 how the Pharisees were taught to see their own likeness in the language of the prophet. Now the mirror is held up once more, and they are seen to have been anticipated in that very substitution of human for divine ordinances for which our Lord reproves them.

(9) **Teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.**—Neither word is quite adequately rendered. The "doctrines" are not articles of faith, propositions to be believed, but precepts which were taught as binding The "commandments" are single, special rules as contrasted with the divine "commandment," which was exceedingly broad.

(10) **He called the multitude, and said unto them.**—The act was more startling and suggestive than appears on the surface. He did not appeal to the authority of great names or of a higher tribunal. He removed the case, as it were, to another court, which His opponents did not recognise, and turned from the disputes and traditions of the schools to the unperverted conscience of the common people.

(11) **Not that which goeth into the mouth.**—Up to this time the question had been debated indirectly. The scribes had been convicted of unfitness to speak with authority on moral questions. Now a great broad principle is asserted, which not only cut at the root of Pharisaism, but, in its ultimate tendency, swept away the whole Levitical system of ceremonial purity—the distinction between clean and unclean meats and the like. It went, as the amazement of the disciples showed, far beyond their grasp as yet. Even after the day of Pentecost, Peter still prided himself on the observance of the Law which was thus annulled, and boasted that he had never "eaten anything common or unclean" (Acts x. 14). So slow were even those who had sat at the feet of Jesus to take in the thought that purity was inward and not outward, a spiritual and not a physical quality.

(12) **Then came his disciples.**—The sequence of events appears in Mark vii. 17. The Pharisees drew

unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? (13) But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.[a] (14) Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind.[b] And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. (15) Then answered Peter and said unto him,[c] Declare unto us this parable. (16) And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding? (17) Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? (18) But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. (19) For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts,[d] murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: (20) these are *the things* which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

(21) Then Jesus went thence,[e] and

[a] John 15. 2.

[b] Luke 6. 39.

[d] Gen. 6.5, and 8. 21.

[c] Mark 7. 17.

[e] Mark 7. 24.

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back as in holy horror at the boldness with which the new Teacher set Himself, not only above their traditions, but above laws which they looked on as divine, and therefore permanent. The multitude heard in silence a teaching so unlike that with which they had been familiar from their youth. Even the disciples were half perplexed at the teaching itself, half afraid of what might be its immediate consequences. They came with their question, "Knowest thou not that the Pharisees were offended?" Had their Master calculated the consequences of thus attacking, not individual members or individual traditions of the party, but its fundamental principle, that which was, so to speak, its very *raison d'être*?

(13) **Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted.**—The disciples could hardly fail to connect the words with the parable which they had heard so lately. The system and the men that they had been taught to regard as pre-eminently religious were, after all, in their Master's judgment, as the tares and not as the wheat (xiii. 37, 38). So far as they were a sect or party, His Father had not planted them. They, too, were left, according to the teaching of that parable, to grow until the harvest, but their end was sure—they should be "rooted out." The words which proclaim their doom were, however, intentionally general in their form. In that divine judgment which works through the world's history, foreshadowing the issues of the last great day, that doom is written on every system, party, sect which originates in man's zeal, in narrowness, in self-will. It has not been planted by the Father, and therefore it is doomed to perish.

(14) **They be blind leaders of the blind.**—It would appear from Rom. ii. 19 that the phrase was one in common use to describe the ideal of the Rabbi's calling. Now they heard it in a new form, which told them that their state was the very reverse of that ideal. And that which was worst in it was that their blindness was self-chosen (xiii. 15), and that they were yet all unconscious of it, and boasted that they saw (John ix. 41).

**If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.**—The proverb was probably a familiar one (it is given in St. Luke vi. 39 as part of the Sermon on the Plain), but, as now spoken, it had the character of a prophecy. We have but to read the Jewish historian's account of the years that preceded the destruction of Jerusalem to see what the "ditch" was towards which teachers and people were alike blindly hastening. Bitter sectarianism, and wild dreams, and baseless hopes, and maddened zeal, and rejection of the truth which alone had power to save them, this was the issue which both were preparing for themselves, and from which there was no escape.

(15) **Declare unto us this parable.**—The answer shows that Peter's question referred not to the proverb that immediately preceded, but to what seemed to him the strange, startling utterance of verse 11. It was significant that he could not as yet take in the thought that it was a truth to be received literally. To him it seemed a dark enigmatic saying, which required an explanation, like that which had been given of the parable of the Sower, to make its meaning clear.

(16) **Are ye also yet without understanding?**—The pronoun is emphatic: "Ye, My disciples, who have heard from My lips the spiritual nature of My kingdom, are *ye* too, like the Pharisees, still such backward scholars?"

(17) **Is cast out into the draught.**—The word is used in its old English meaning, as equivalent to drain, sewer, cesspool (see 2 Kings x. 27). St. Mark (vii. 19) adds the somewhat perplexing words, "purging all meats," on which see Note on that verse. The principle implied is that a process purely physical from first to last cannot in itself bring any moral defilement. It was possible, of course, that the appetites connected with that process might bring the taint of moral evil; but then these appetites were there before the food, and they took their place among the things that came "out of the heart," and not into it.

(19) **Evil thoughts, . . . blasphemies.**—The plural form points to the manifold variety of the forms of guilt under each several head. The order is in some measure an ascending one, beginning with the "thoughts," or rather trains of thought, which are the first suggestions of evil, and ending in the "blasphemies" or revilings which, directly or indirectly, have God and not man for their object. In this beginning and end we may trace a reference to those "evil surmises" which had led the Pharisees, as in xii. 24, to words which were blasphemy against the Son of Man, and came perilously near to the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

(21) **Into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.**—St. Mark (vii. 31) says (in the best MSS.) our Lord passed, after the miracle, "through Sidon," and so we have the one recorded exception to that self-imposed law of His ministry which kept Him within the limits of the land of Israel. To the disciples it might seem that He was simply withdrawing from conflict with the excited hostility of His Pharisee opponents. We may see a relation between the two acts not unlike that which afterwards connected the vision of Peter at Joppa with his entry into the house of Cornelius at Cæsarea. He was showing in act, as before in word (chap. xi. 21), that He regarded Tyre and Sidon as standing on the same level as Chorazin and Bethsaida. The dust of the heathen cities was not more defiling than that of Capernaum. The journey from Caper-

departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. (22) And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. (23) But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. (24) But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.[a] (25) Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. (26) But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it*

[a] ch. 10. 6.

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naum to Tyre was one which might be made in one long day of active walking.

(22) **A woman of Canaan.**—The terms Canaanite and Canaan, which in the earlier books of the Old Testament were often applied in a wider sense to all the original inhabitants of what was afterwards the land of Israel (Gen. x. 18; xii. 6; Judg. i. 10), were used more specifically of Phœnicia and its inhabitants (Ex. iii. 8, 17; Ezra ix. 1, and elsewhere), and are employed here with that meaning. St. Mark describes her more definitely as "a Greek" (*i.e.*, a heathen, the name "Greek" having gained a wider connotation, much as "Frank" has done in recent times), a "Syro-Phœnician by nation."

**Came out of the same coasts.**—Better, *of those regions, coming forth* (*i.e.*, from some house or village), *cried* . . .

**O Lord, thou son of David.**—The words show that the fame of the Prophet of Nazareth had travelled beyond the limits of Galilee, and that He was known to the people of the Tyre and Sidon district by the most popular of the Messianic names. This was natural enough, even if we think only of popular rumours as the channel through which the fame had reached her. Luke vi. 17, however, suggests a more direct source of knowledge. Among the multitude that listened to the Sermon on the Plain, and brought those that were "vexed with unclean spirits," had been people "from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon." The mother of the demoniac daughter may well have cherished for months the hope that one day the great Deliverer would come within her reach. And now, beyond all expectation, He had come across the boundary of Israel, and she saw Him in her own country. St. Mark adds, significantly, that "He would have no man know" of His presence, but He "could not be hid" (vii. 24). The scene, as described by St. Mark, was in the house into which He had retired in order to avoid notice.

(23) **He answered her not a word.**—Two alternative views present themselves as to our Lord's action in this matter. That which has found favour with nearly all ancient and most modern interpreters assumes that from the first He had purposed to comply with her request, and spoke as He did only to test and manifest her faith. Men have been unwilling to recognise the possibility of a change of purpose in the human nature of our Lord which they, unconsciously heretical, confused with the divine, and have preferred to fall back on the supposition of a simulated harshness. The truer and more reverential course, I venture to think, is to accept the impression which, apart from any *à priori* theory, the facts seem naturally to make, and to see, in what passed, the prevailing power of prayer working on the sympathy of Christ, and leading Him to pass beyond the ordinary limits of His appointed work. On this assumption, it is our work to trace, with all reverence, the successive stages of the process. And first, even the silence is significant, and implies a conflict. It would have been easy to dismiss her with a word. But the tenderness which He felt towards this sufferer, as towards others, forbade that course, and yet the sense of the normal limitation of His work forbade the other. Silence was the natural outcome of the equilibrium of these conflicting motives.

**Send her away; for she crieth after us.**—The disciples were clearly unable to enter into either of the two feelings which were thus contending for the mastery. Their words, as interpreted by our Lord's answer, were, in some sense, a plea in favour of the woman. They wished Him to grant what she asked for, and so to dismiss her. And yet we feel that their words were far harsher than their Master's silence. They wanted only to be rid of her presence, which had followed them from the streets into the house, to be freed from the loud eager cries which vexed them.

(24) **I am not sent** (better, *I was not sent*) **but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**—This, then, was what had restrained Him. Those wandering sheep, without a shepherd, were the appointed objects of His care. Were He to go beyond that limit in a single case, it might be followed by a thousand, and then, becoming, as it were, before the time, the Apostle of the Gentiles, He would cease to draw to Himself the hearts of Israel as their Redeemer. We call to mind the case of the centurion's servant (chap. viii. 10), and wonder that that was not decisive as a precedent in the supplicant's favour. The two cases stood, however, on a very different footing. The centurion who had built a synagogue was practically, if not formally, a proselyte of the gate. As the elders of the synagogue pleaded for him as worthy, the work of healing wrought for him would not alienate them or their followers. The woman belonged, on the contrary, to the most scorned and hated of all heathen races, to the Canaan on which the primeval curse was held to rest (Gen. ix. 25), and had as yet done nothing to show that she was in any sense a convert to the faith of Israel.

(25) **Then came she and worshipped him.**—The word implies the act of prostrate homage. She had apparently stood apart during the conversation between the Prophet and His disciples, and now came again, renewing her passionate entreaty.

(26) **To cast it to dogs.**—The word used was diminutive in its form, and as such pointed not to the wild, unclean beasts that haunt the streets of an Eastern city (Ps. lix. 6), but to the tamer animals that were bred in the house, and kept as pets. The history of Tobias and his dog, in the Apocrypha, furnishes the one example in Biblical literature of this friendly relation between the dog and his master (Tobit v. 16).

The answer has, even taking this into account, a somewhat harsh sound, but it did not go beyond the language with which the woman must have been familiar, and it was probably but a common proverb, like our "Charity begins at home," indicating the line of demarcation which gave a priority to the claims of the family of Israel to those of strangers. We may to dogs. (27) And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. (28) Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great *is* thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour. (29) And Jesus departed from thence,[a] and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there. (30) And great multitudes came unto him,[b] having with them *those that were* lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them: (31) insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.

(32) Then Jesus called his disciples *unto him*,[c] and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send

[a] Mark 7. 31.

[c] Mark 8. 1.

[b] Isa. 35. 5.

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well believe that there was no intentional scorn in it, though it emphasized an actual distinction.

(27) **Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs.**—The insertion of the conjunction "for" in the Greek gives it a force which it is hard to reproduce in English, "Yet grant what I ask, for the dogs under the table . . ." The woman catches at the form which had softened the usual word of scorn, and presses the privilege which it implied. She did not ask that the "children" might be deprived of any fragment of their portion; but taking her place, contentedly, among the "dogs," she could still claim Him as her Master, and ask for the "crumbs" of His mercy. The Talmud contains a story so singularly parallel to this that it is worth reproducing. "There was a famine in the land, and stores of corn were placed under the care of Rabbi Jehudah the Holy, to be distributed to those only who were skilled in the knowledge of the Law. And, behold, a man came, Jonathan, the son of Amram, and clamorously asked for his portion. The Rabbi asked him whether he knew the condition, and had fulfilled it, and then the supplicant changed his tone, and said, 'Nay, but feed me as a dog is fed, who eats of the crumbs of the feast,' and the Rabbi hearkened to his words, and gave him of the corn."

(28) **O woman, great is thy faith.**—The answer of the woman changed the conditions of the problem, and therefore, we may reverently add, changed the purpose which depended on them. Here again, as in the case of the centurion, our Lord found a faith greater than He had met with in Israel. The woman was, in St. Paul's words, a child of the faith, though not of the flesh, of Abraham (Rom. iv. 16), and as such was entitled to its privileges. She believed in the love of God her Father, in the pity even of the Prophet who had answered her with words of seeming harshness.

**Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.**—St. Mark adds, as spoken by our Lord, "Go thy way, the devil is gone out of thy daughter," and that when the woman went to her house, she found her child laid on the bed, calm and peace and slumber having taken the place of restless frenzy.

It is obvious that the lesson of the story stretches far and wide. Wherever man or woman is by birth, or creed, or even sin, among those whom the judgment of the heirs of religious privileges counts unworthy even of the lowest of spiritual blessings, among outcasts and heirs of shame, the excommunicated and the lost, there the thought that "the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs" may bring, as it has often brought, the faith that changes despair into something not far short of the full assurance of hope.

(29) **Jesus departed from thence.**—As St. Mark (in the better MSS.) gives the narrative, His journey led Him actually through Sidon. It was the one instance in which He visited a distinctly heathen city, and walked by the shore of the Great Sea, and looked out towards the isles of Chittim, the isles of the Gentiles, to which His name was to come in after years as the message of joy and peace and life. It is significant, as Sidon lay to the north of Tyre, that He thus extended His journey, as though seeking for Himself and His disciples a longer period of rest for prayer and meditation. His return to Galilee must have been through some of the mountain passes of the Hermon range, bringing Him down upon the eastern shore of the lake.

(30) **Blind, dumb.**—St. Mark (vii. 31—37) relates one memorable instance of a work of healing in this connection. Here we get a great aggregate of miracles, unrecorded in detail, working on the minds of the multitude, and leading them to repeated utterances of praise in the form of a doxology—they "glorified the God of Israel."

(32) **I have compassion on the multitude.**—The obvious resemblance between the details of this narrative and that of the feeding of the Five Thousand has led the schools of critics, who do not regard either as the record of a fact, to treat this as only another version of the same incident, or rather, from their point of view, of the same legend. The notes of distinctness are, however, too numerous to admit of that explanation. The number of the people fed, their three days' waiting till their food was exhausted, the number of the loaves at hand, and of the baskets in which the fragments were collected after the meal, are all different. More than this, the words rendered in both narratives by "basket" in the Authorised version are not the same in the Greek. Here the word is σπυρίς (*spuris*), the hamper in which provisions were packed as for a party travelling together, large enough, as in St. Paul's escape from Damascus (Acts ix. 25), to hold a man; while in the other it was the κόφινος (*cophinus*), or smaller basket, which a man carried in his hand. Lastly, our Lord's words in xvi. 9, 10, distinctly recognise the two miracles, and connect the close of each with the word which was thus specially appropriate to it. Unless we adopt the incredible hypothesis that the one narrative was first so disguised that it lost the marks of its identity, and that the Evangelists, having combined the two, then invented our Lord's words, with all their apparent freshness and adaptation to the special circumstances of the hour, they must be admitted to be decisive as proving that there had been two events, like in kind, to which He thus referred. It is significant that here, as so often before, the display

them away fasting, lest they faint in the way. (33) And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude? (34) And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes. (35) And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. (36) And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake *them*, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. (37) And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken *meat* that was left seven baskets full. (38) And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children. (39) And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala.

A.D. 32.

[a] Mark 8. 11; Luke 12. 54.

CHAPTER XVI.—(1) The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came,[a] and

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of miraculous power in its highest form originates not in answer to a challenge, or as being offered as a proof of a divine mission, but simply from compassion. Three days had passed, and still the crowds hung on His words and waited for His loving acts, and now they began to show signs of exhaustion that moved His sympathy.

(33) **His disciples say unto him.**—Here, on the assumption that we are dealing with a true record, a difficulty of another kind meets us. How was it, we ask, that the disciples, with the memory of the former miracle still fresh in their recollection, should answer as before with the same child-like perplexity? Why did they not at once assume that the same divine power could be put forth to meet a like want now? The answers to that question may, perhaps, be grouped as follows:—(1.) It is not easy for us to put ourselves in the position of men who witnessed, as they did, these workings of a supernatural might. We think of the Power as inherent, and therefore permanent. To them it might seem intermittent, a gift that came and went. Their daily necessities had been supplied, before and after the great event, in the common way of gift or purchase. The gathering of the fragments (Matt. xiv. 20; John vi. 12) seemed to imply that they were not to rely on the repetition of the wonder. (2.) The fact that three days had passed, and that hunger had been allowed to pass on to the borders of exhaustion, might well have led to think that the power was not to be exerted now. (3.) Our Lord's implied question —though, as before, He Himself "knew what He would do" (John vi 6)—must have appeared to them to exclude the thought that He was about to make use again of that reserve of power which He had displayed before. They would seem to themselves to be simply following in His footsteps when they answered His question as on the level which He Himself thus appeared to choose.

(34) **Seven, and a few little fishes.**—The resemblance of the answer to that which had been given before is, at least, interesting as showing what was the provision habitually made by the travelling company of preachers for the supply of their daily wants. The few barley loaves and dried fishes, this was all their store, as they went from village to village, or passed days and nights on the hills of Galilee.

(35) **He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.**—Probably, with the same orderly precision as before, by hundreds and by fifties, the women and children, as we learn from verse 38, being in this instance also grouped together apart from the men.

(37) **Seven baskets full.**—The nature of the baskets has been explained above. As it is hardly likely that these could have been carried by the disciples on their journey, we must think of them as having been probably brought by some of the multitude to hold their provisions. The fact that the disciples were shortly afterwards (xvi. 7) again without provision, suggests the thought that the fragments themselves had been in their turn distributed to the poor of the villages in the district to which our Lord and the disciples now turned their courses.

(39) **Into the coasts of Magdala.**—The better MSS. give the reading Magadan. The narrative implies that it was on the western shore of the lake, and it is probably to be identified with the modern village of *El Mejdel*, about three miles above *Tabarieh* (Tiberias). The name would seem to be an altered form of the Hebrew *Migdol*, a tower. On the assumption that "Mary, called Magdalene," derived her name from a town of that name, we may think of our Lord's visit as having been in some way connected with her presence. It is clear that the company of devout women who ministered to Him could hardly have followed Him in the more distant journey to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and it was natural, if they did not, that they should have returned for a time to their homes. St. Mark gives Dalmanutha as the place where our Lord disembarked. This has been identified with the modern *Ain-el-Bârideh*, the "cold fountain," a glen which opens upon the lake about a mile from Magdala.

## XVI.

(1) **The Pharisees also with the Sadducees.**—The presence of members of the latter sect, who do not elsewhere appear in our Lord's Galilean ministry, is noticeable. It is probably explained by St. Mark's version of the warning in verse 6, where "the leaven of Herod" appears as equivalent to "the leaven of the Sadducees" in St. Matthew's report. The Herodians were the Galilean Sadducees, and the union of the two hostile parties was the continuation of the alliance which had begun after our Lord's protest against the false reverence for the Sabbath, which was common to both the parties (Mark iii. 6).

**That he would shew them a sign from heaven.**—The signs and wonders that had been wrought on earth were not enough for the questioners. There might be collusion, or a power, like that implied in the charge of "casting out devils by Beelzebub," preternatural, but not divine. What they asked was a sign like Samuel's thunder from the clear blue sky (1 Sam. xii. 18), or Elijah's fire from heaven (1 Kings xviii. 38); or, possibly, following the train of thought suggested by the discourse at Capernaum, now definitely asking, what they hinted then (John vi. 30, 31), for bread, not multiplied on earth, but coming straight from heaven.

tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. (2) He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, *It will be* fair weather: for the sky is red. (3) And in the morning, *It will be* foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O *ye* hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not *discern* the signs of the times? (4) A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed. (5) And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.

(6) Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. (7) And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have taken no bread. (8) *Which* when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye

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(2) **When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather.**—It is remarkable that some of the best MSS., including the Vatican and Sinaitic, omit the whole of these suggestive words. We can hardly think of them, however, looking to their singular originality of form, as interpolated by a later transcriber, and have therefore to ask how we can explain the omission. They are not found in St. Mark, and this in itself shows that there were some reports of our Lord's answer to the Pharisees in which they did not appear. Possibly the transcriber in this case was unable to read their meaning, and the same feeling, or the wish to bring the reports in the two Gospels into closer agreement with each other, may have influenced the writers of the two MSS. in question. Turning (1) to the words as they stand in the received text, we note, as to their form, that the insertion of the words in italics somewhat mars the colloquial abruptness of the original, "Fair weather, for the sky is red"; and (2) that the use of "sky," instead of "heaven," hides the point of the answer. "You watch the heaven," He in substance answers, "and are weather-wise as to coming storm or sunshine. If your eyes were open to watch the signs of the spiritual firmament, you would find tokens enough of the coming sunshine of God's truth, the rising of the day-spring from on high—tokens enough, also, of the darkness of the coming storm, the 'foul weather' of God's judgments." Even the fact that the redness of the sky is the same in both cases is not without its significance. The flush, the glow, the excitement that pervaded men's minds, was at once the prognostic of a brighter day following on that which was now closing, and the presage of the storm and tempest in which that day should end.

It is a singular instance of the way in which the habit of minute criticism stunts or even kills the power of discernment which depends on imagination, that Strauss should have looked on words so full of profound and suggestive meaning as "absolutely unintelligible" (*Leben Jesu*, II. viii. p. 85).

In the outward framework of the parable the weather-signs of Palestine seem to have been the same as those of England. The clear red evening sky is a prophecy of a bright morning. The morning red—not "red" simply, but with the indescribable threatening aspect implied in "lowering," the frown of the sky, as it were (comp. Mark x. 22, where the same word is rendered "grieved") —makes men look for storms.

(4) **The sign of the prophet Jonas.**—See Note on xii. 39. As given by St. Mark, the answer was a more absolute refusal, "No sign" (*i.e.*, none of the kind that was demanded) "shall be given to this generation."

(5) **They had forgotten.**—Better, *they forgot.* St. Mark, with his usual precision in detail, states that they had but "one loaf" with them. Either the suddenness of their Lord's departure had deprived them of their customary forethought, or, it may be, they were beginning to depend wrongly on the wonder-working power, as though it would be used, not as before, to supply the wants of the famished multitude, but as rendering that forethought needless for themselves.

(6) **Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.**—The form of the warning was obviously determined by the fact just narrated. The Master saw the perplexed looks and heard the self-reproaching or mutually accusing whispers of the disciples, and made them the text of a proverb which was a concentrated parable. As St. Mark gives the words, they stand, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod," and this, if we have to make our choice, we may believe to have been the form in which they were actually spoken; St. Matthew, or the report which he followed, substituting for the less known Herodians the better known Sadducees. The language of the tetrarch, as has been shown (see Note on chap. xiv. 2), implies that Sadduceeism had been the prevailing belief of his life, and the current of Jewish political, not to say religious, sympathies, naturally led the Sadducean priests, courting (as Caiaphas did) the favour of the Roman rulers, to fraternise with the scribes who attached themselves to the party of the tetrarch. (Comp. Acts v. 17.)

(7) **It is because we have taken no bread.**—There is a childish *naïveté* in their self-questioning which testifies to the absolute originality and truthfulness of the record, and so to the genuineness of the question which follows, and which assumes the reality of the two previous miracles. The train of thought which connected the warning and the fact was probably hardly formulated even in their own minds. It may be that they imagined that as the Pharisee would not eat of bread that had been defiled by the touch of heathen or publican, so their Master forbade them, however great their need, to receive food at the hands of either of the sects that had combined against Him.

(8) **O ye of little faith.**—Our Lord reproves not the want of discernment which made them slow to receive the meaning of the similitude, but their want of faith. The discernment depended (in part, at least) on imaginative power, or acquired culture, for the lack of which they were not responsible. But their memory of the manner in which their wants had been twice supplied might at least have taught them that no such case of extreme necessity, such as they pictured to themselves, was likely to arise while He was with them, and therefore that their gross carnal interpre-

have brought no bread? (9) Do ye not yet understand,[a] neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? (10) Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand,[b] and how many baskets ye took up? (11) How is it that ye do not understand that I spake *it* not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? (12) Then understood they how that he bade *them* not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

(13) When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?[c] (14) And they

[a] ch. 14. 17.

[b] ch. 15. 34.

[c] Mark 8. 27; Luke 9. 18.

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tation of His words could not possibly be the true one. Memory in this case should have been an aid to faith, and faith, in its turn, would have quickened spiritual discernment.

(9, 10) **How many baskets.**—The distinction between the two kinds of baskets—the *cophini* and the *spurides*—is, as before noticed (Note on Matt. xv. 37), strictly observed here.

(11) **How is it that ye do not understand?**—True to His method of education our Lord does not Himself interpret the parable, but is, as it were, content to suggest the train of thought which led to the interpretation. And the disciples, slow of heart as they were, followed the clue thus given. "Then understood they." Memory did at last quicken faith, and faith imparted the imaginative insight which sees its way through parables and dark sayings.

(12) **The doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.**—Better, *teaching;* not so much the formulated dogmas of the sect as its general drift and tendency. The leaven was (as expressly stated in Luke xii. 1) "hypocrisy," the unreality of a life respectable, rigid, outwardly religious, even earnest in its zeal, and yet wanting in the humility and love which are of the essence of true holiness. That of the Sadducees and of Herod, was, we may believe (it is not specially defined), the more open form of worldliness and self-indulgence which allied themselves with their denial of the resurrection and therefore of eternal life.

(13) **Cæsarea Philippi.**—The order of the journeyings of our Lord and His disciples would seem to have been as follows:—From the coasts of Tyre and Sidon they came, passing through Sidon, to the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee (Mark vii. 31); thence by ship to Magdala and Dalmanutha, on the western shore (Matt. xv. 39; Mark viii. 10); thence, again crossing the lake (Mark viii. 13), to the eastern Bethsaida (Mark viii. 22); thence to Cæsarea Philippi. There is in all these movements an obvious withdrawal from the populous cities which had been the scene of His earlier labours, and which had practically rejected Him and cast in their lot with His enemies. This last journey took them to a district which He had apparently never before visited, and to which He now came, it would seem, not as a Preacher of the kingdom, but simply for retirement and perhaps for safety. Cæsarea Philippi (so called to distinguish it from the town of the same name on the sea-coast) does not appear (unless we identify it with Laish or Dan, and for this there is no sufficient evidence) in the history of the Old Testament. Its position at the foot of Hermon led Robinson (*Researches*, iii. 404, 519) to identify it with the Baal-gad of Josh. xi. 17, xii. 7, xiii. 5, or the Baal-hermon of Judg. iii. 3; but this also hardly extends beyond the region of conjecture. The site of the city was near the chief source of the Jordan, which flowed from a cave which, under the influence of the Greek *cultus* that came in with the rule of the Syrian kings, was dedicated to Pan, and the old name of the city, Paneas, bore witness to this consecration. Herod the Great built a temple there in honour of Augustus (Jos. *Ant.* xv. 10, § 3), and his son Philip the tetrarch (to whose province it belonged) enlarged and embellished the city, and re-named it in honour of the emperor and to perpetuate his own memory. From Agrippa II. it received the name of Neroneas, as a like compliment to the emperor to whom he owed his title; but the old local name survived these passing changes, and still exists in the modern Bâniâs. With the one exception of the journey through Sidon (Mark vii. 31), it was the northern limit of our Lord's wanderings; and belonging as it does to the same period of His ministry, His visit to it may be regarded, though not as an extension of His work beyond its self-imposed limits, as indicating something like a sympathy with the out-lying heathen who made up the bulk of its population—a sense of rest, it may be, in turning to them from the ceaseless strife and bitterness which He encountered at Capernaum and Jerusalem. How the days passed which were spent on the journey, what gracious words or acts of mercy marked His track, what communings with His Father were held in the solitude of the mountain heights—are questions which we may dwell upon in reverential silence, but must be content to leave unanswered. The incident which follows is the one event of which we have any record.

**Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?**—The Greek emphasises "men" by prefixing the article, so as to contrast the opinions of men, as such, with God's revelation. The question comes before us, as possibly it did to the disciples, with a sharp abruptness. We may believe, however, that it occupied a fitting place in the spiritual education through which our Lord was leading His disciples. It was a time of, at least, seeming failure and partial desertion. "From that time," St. John relates, speaking of what followed after the discourse at Capernaum, "many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him" (John vi. 66). He had turned to the Twelve and asked, in tones of touching sadness, "Will ye also go away?" and had received from Peter, as the spokesman of the others, what was for the time a reassuring answer, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life;" and this had been coupled with the confession of faith which we now find repeated. But in the meantime there had been signs of wavering. He had had to rebuke them as being "of little faith" (verse 8). They had urged something like a policy of reticence in His conflict with the Pharisees (chap. xv. 12). One of the Twelve was cherishing in his soul the "devil-temper" of a betrayer (John vi. 70). It was time, if we may so speak, that they should be put to a crucial test, and the alternative of faith or want of faith pressed home upon their consciences.

(14) **And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist.**—The passage is of the greatest possible interest as one of the very few that indicate

said, Some *say that thou art* John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

(15) He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? (16) And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.[a] (17) And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it*

[a] John 6. 69.

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the impressions shaped into beliefs that were floating among the people as to our Lord's character and mission. They were based, it will be seen in each case, upon a popular doctrine of transmigration, to which the Pharisees had given a place in their system of teaching. The great actors of the past were still in existence. They might, at any great national crisis, reappear to continue and complete their work. Each of the answers has a further special interest of its own. (1.) The identification of our Lord with the Baptist has already met us as coming from the lips of the tetrarch Antipas, adopted, but not originated, by him as explaining our Lord's mighty works (Matt. xiv. 2; Luke ix. 7). (2.) The belief that Elijah had reappeared was of the same nature. He was expected as the forerunner of the Messiah (Mal. iv. 5). The imagination of the people had at first seen in the Baptist the reappearance of the Tishbite, but he, though working in the spirit and power of Elijah, had disclaimed the character which was thus ascribed to him, and it was natural that the imagination of the people should now turn to One who appeared to them as simply continuing his work. The character of our Lord's recent miracles, corresponding as it did to that which was recorded as wrought by Elijah for the widow of Sarepta (1 Kings xvii. 14), had probably strengthened that impression. (3.) The name of Jeremiah introduces a new train of legendary thought. The impression made by that prophet on the minds of men had led to something like a mythical after-growth. It was said that the spirit of Jeremiah had passed into Zechariah (see Note on Matt. xxvii. 9), and on that assumption another reappearance might well seem probable. He, it was believed, had hidden the ark, and the tabernacle, and the altar of incense in a cave in "the mountain where Moses climbed up and saw the heritage of God"—*i.e.*, in Nebo, or Pisgah (2 Macc. ii. 1—7)—and was expected to come and guide the people in the time "when God should gather His people together" to the place of concealment. He had appeared to Judas Maccabeus in a vision as "a man with grey hairs, and exceeding glorious," and as the guardian prophet of the people, praying for them and for the Holy City, had given him a golden sword as the gift of God (2 Macc. xv. 13—16). As the prophet who had foretold the new covenant and the coming of the Lord our Righteousness (Jer. xxiii. 6, xxxi. 31) he was identified, as thoroughly as Isaiah, with the Messianic expectations of the people. Something, we may add, there may have been in our Lord's human aspect, as a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, which may have helped to suggest this identification with the prophet who was, above all others of the goodly company, a prophet of lamentations and tears and woe. (4.) The last conjecture was more vague and undefined, and was probably the resource of those who were impressed with wonder at our Lord's words and works, and yet could not bring themselves to acknowledge Him as what He claimed to be. All the four conjectures, it will be seen, fell far short of the recognition of the Christ.

Interpreted in connection with the vision of Dan. vii. 13, the words of the question, "Whom do men say that I, *the Son of Man*, am?" did, in fact, assume His claim to be the Christ. But it remained to be seen whether the disciples had risen to their Lord's meaning in thus speaking of Himself, and would, on their part, adopt that interpretation. The report which they made of the belief of others shows how little, at this time (whatever may have been the case earlier or later), He was regarded as the Messiah by the mass of the people.

(15) **Whom say ye?**—The pronoun is doubly emphasised in the Greek, "But *ye*—whom say *ye* . . .?" The question is, as has been said, parallel in tone, though not in form, to that of John vi. 67. Had they still a distinct faith of their own? or were they, too, falling back into these popular surmises?

(16) **Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.**—The variations in the other Gospels—St. Mark giving simply, "Thou art the Christ," and St. Luke, "The Christ of God"—are interesting in their bearing on the question of literal inspiration, but do not affect the meaning; and the fullest of the three reports may be received without hesitation as the most authentic. The confession was made by Peter, partly, we may believe, as the representative of the others, partly, as the special promise that follows implies, from the personal fervour of his character. He believed himself, and had impressed his faith on them. His words reproduced the confession of John vi. 69, even verbally, if we follow the received text, but the better MSS. of that Gospel have a different reading: "Thou art the Holy One of God." In any form they recognised to the full our Lord's character as the Christ; they identified Him with the Son of Man in Daniel's vision, and, more than this, they recognised in that Son of Man one who was also not "*a* son" only, but, in some high incommunicable sense, "*the* Son of the living God."

(17) **Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona.**—Looking to the reality of our Lord's human nature, its capacity for wonder (Mark vi. 6, Luke vii. 9), anger (Mark iii. 5), sorrow (John xi. 35, Luke xix. 41), and other emotions, it is not over-bold to recognise in these words something like a tone of exalted joy. It is the first direct personal beatitude pronounced by Him; and, as such, presents a marked contrast to the rebukes which had been addressed to Peter, as to the others, as being "without understanding," "of little faith," with "their heart yet hardened." Here, then, He had found at last the clear, unshaken, unwavering faith which was the indispensable condition for the manifestation of His kingdom as a visible society upon earth. The beatitude is solemnised (as in John i. 42) by the full utterance of the name which the disciple had borne before he was called by the new name of Cephas, or Peter, to the work of an Apostle. He was to distinguish between the old natural and the new supernatural life. (Comp. John xxi. 15.)

**Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee.**—Better, *It was not flesh and blood that revealed.* The words are used in their common Hebrew meaning (as in John i. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 50; Eph. vi. 12) for human nature, human agency, in all their manifold forms. The disciple had received the faith which he now professed, not through popular rumours, not through the teaching of scribes, but by a revelation unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. (18) And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter,[a] and upon this rock I will build my church; and the

[a] John 1. 42.

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from the Father. He was led, in the strictest sense of the words, through the veil of our Lord's human nature to recognise the divine.

(18) **Thou art Peter, and upon this rock . . .**—It is not easy, in dealing with a text which for many centuries has been the subject-matter of endless controversies, to clear our minds of those "afterthoughts of theology" which have gathered round it, and, in part at least, overlaid its meaning. It is clear, however, that we can only reach the true meaning by putting those controversies aside, at all events till we have endeavoured to realise what thoughts the words at the time actually conveyed to those who heard them, and that when we have grasped that meaning it will be our best preparation for determining what bearing they have upon the later controversies of ancient or modern times. And (1) it would seem clear that the connection between Peter and the rock (the words in the Greek differ in gender, πέτρος and πέτρα, but were identical in the Aramaic, which our Lord probably used) was meant to be brought into special prominence. Now, at last, by this confession of his faith, Peter had risen to the height of his new calling, and was worthy of his new name. (2) Whether he is to be identified with the *rock* of the next clause is, however, a question on which men may legitimately differ. On the one side there is the probability that in the Aramaic, in which our Lord spoke, there would be no difference between the words in the two clauses; on the other, the possibility that He may have used the Greek words, or that the Evangelist may have intended to mark the distinction which he felt by the use of the two words, which undoubtedly differ in their meaning, πέτρος being a "stone" or fragment of rock, while πέτρα is the rock itself. The Aramaic *Cepha*, it may be noted, has the former rather than the latter meaning. (3) On the assumption of a distinction there follows the question, What is the rock? Peter's faith (subjective)? or the truth (objective) which he confessed? or Christ Himself? Taking all the facts of the case, the balance seems to incline in favour of the last view. (1.) Christ and not Peter is the Rock in 1 Cor. x. 4, the Foundation in 1 Cor. iii. 11. (2.) The poetry of the Old Testament associated the idea of the Rock with the greatness and steadfastness of God, not with that of a man [Deut. xxxii. 4, 18; 2 Sam. xxii. 3; xxiii. 3; Ps. xviii. 2, 31, 46; Isa. xvii. 10; Hab. i. 12 (Hebrew)]. (3.) As with the words, which in their form present a parallel to these, "Destroy this temple" (John ii. 19), so here, we may believe the meaning to have been indicated by significant look or gesture. The Rock on which the Church was to be built was Himself, in the mystery of that union of the Divine and the Human which had been the subject of St. Peter's confession. Had Peter himself been meant, we may add, the simpler form, "Thou art Peter, and on thee will I build My Church," would have been clearer and more natural. As it is, the collocation suggests an implied contrast: "Thou art the Rock-Apostle; and yet not *the* Rock on which the Church is to be built. It is enough for thee to have found the Rock, and to have built on the one Foundation." (Comp. vii. 24.)

**I will build my church.**—It is significant that this is the first occurrence of the word Church (*Ecclesia*) in the New Testament, the only passage but one (xviii. 17) in which it is found in the whole cycle of our Lord's recorded teaching. Its use was every way significant. Partly, doubtless, it came with the associations which it had in the Greek of the Old Testament, as used for the "assembly" or "congregation" of the Lord (Deut. xviii. 16; xxiii. 1; Ps. xxvi. 12); but partly also, as soon at least as the word came in its Greek form before Greek readers, it would bring with it the associations of Greek politics. The *Ecclesia* was the assembly of free citizens, to which belonged judicial and legislative power, and from which aliens and slaves were alike excluded. The mere use of the term was accordingly a momentous step in the education of the disciples. They had been looking for a kingdom with the King, as its visible Head, sitting on an earthly throne. They were told that it was to be realised in a society, an assembly, like those which in earthly polities we call popular or democratic. He, the King, claimed that society as His own. He was its real Head and Founder; but, outwardly, it was to be what the word which He now chose described. And this Church He was about to build. It need hardly be said that the word *ecclesia* did not lend itself so readily as the English equivalent does to the idea of building. The society and the fabric in which the members of the society meet were not then, as they are now, described by the same term. The similitude was bolder than it seems to us. Like the "city set on a hill" of v. 14, like the "vine" of John xv. 1, it may well have been suggested by the scenery in the midst of which the words were uttered. For there upon one rock rose the ruins of the old Canaanite city of Hazor; and on another the stately palace built by the Herodian princes, and still, as the Castle of Shubeibeh, covering an extent of ground equal to that occupied by the Castle of Heidelberg (Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, c. xi.). Once started on its way, the similitude became the fruitful source of new thoughts and phrases. The *ecclesia* was the "house of God" (1 Tim. iii. 15); it was a "holy temple" (Eph. ii. 21). All gifts were bestowed for the work of "edifying" or building it up (1 Cor. xiv. 3, 4; Eph. iv. 12). Those who laboured in that work were as "wise architects or master-builders" (1 Cor. iii. 10). But Christ, we must remember, claims the work of building as His own. Whatever others may do, He is the supreme Master-builder. As in His sacerdotal character, He is at once Priest and Victim, so under the aspect now presented (consistency of metaphors giving way to the necessities of spiritual truth) He is at once the Founder and the Foundation of the new society.

**The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**—The gates of *Hades* (see Note on Matt. xi. 23). not of Gehenna, the place of torment. Hades as the shadow-world of the dead, the unseen counterpart of the visible grave, all-absorbing, all destructive, into whose jaws or gates all things human pass, and from which issue all forces that destroy, is half-idealised, half-personified, as a power, or polity of death. The very phrase, "gates of the grave, or of Hades," meets us in Hezekiah's elegy (Isa. xxxviii. 10), and Wisd. xvi. 13. In Rev. vi. 8 the personification is carried still further, and Death rides upon a pale horse, and Hades follows after him, and both are in the end overthrown and cast into the lake of fire (Rev. xx. 14). And as the gates of the Eastern city were the scene at once of gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (19) And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven:[a] and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (20) Then charged he his disciples that they

[a] John 20. 23.

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kingly judgment (2 Sam. xv. 2) and of the council of the elders (Prov. xxxi. 23), they became the natural symbol of the polity which ruled there. And so the promise declared that all the powers of Hades, all the forces of destruction that attack and in the long-run overpower other societies, should attack, but not overpower, the *ecclesia* of which Christ was the Founder. Nothing in our Lord's teaching is, as measured by man's judgment, more wonderful than the utterance of such a prophecy at such a time. It was, as has been said, a time of seeming failure. He was about to announce, with a clearness unknown before, His coming death as a malefactor, and yet it was at this moment that He proclaimed the perpetuity and triumph of the society which as yet, it may be said, existed only in the germs of a half-realised conception. The history of the world offers hardly any serious parallel to such a prediction, and still less to that fulfilment of it which has been witnessed through eighteen centuries of Christendom, and which does not as yet seem drawing to its close.

(19) **I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.**—Two distinct trains of figurative thought are blended in the words that follow. (1.) The palace of a great king implied the presence of a chief officer, as treasurer or chamberlain, or to use the old Hebrew phrase, as "over the household." And of this, as in the case of Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah (Isa. xxii. 22), the key of office, the key of the gates and of the treasure, was the recognised symbol. In the highest sense that key of the house of David belonged to Christ Himself as the King. It was He who opened and none could shut, who shut and none could open (Rev. iii. 7). But that power was now delegated to the servant whose very name, as an Apostle, marked him out as his Lord's representative, and the after-history of Peter's work, when through him God "opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles" (Acts xiv. 27; xv. 7), was the proof of his faithful discharge of the office thus assigned to him. (2.) With this there was another thought, which in the latter clause of the verse becomes the dominant one. The scribes of Israel were thought of as stewards of the treasures of divine wisdom (xiii. 52). When they were admitted to their office they received, as its symbol, the "key of knowledge" (Luke xi. 52), which was to admit them to the treasure-chambers of the house of the interpreter, the *Beth-Midrash* of the Rabbis. For this work the Christ had been training His disciples, and Peter's confession had shown that the training had so far done its work. He was qualified to be a "scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, and to bring forth out of its treasures things new and old" (chap. xiii. 52); and now the "key" was given to him as the token of his admission to that office. It made him not a priest (that office lay altogether outside the range of the symbolism), but a teacher and interpreter. The words that follow as to "binding" and "loosing" were the formal confirmation in words of that symbolic act. For they, too, belong to the scribe's office and not the priest's, and express an entirely different thought from that of retaining and forgiving sins. That power was, it is true, afterwards bestowed on Peter and his brother-apostles (see Note on John xx. 23), but it is not in question here. As interpreted by the language which was familiar to the Jews (see Lightfoot, *Hor. Hebr.*, on this verse), the words pointed primarily to legislative or interpretative functions, not to the judicial treatment of individual men. The school of Shammai, *e.g.*, *bound* when it declared this or that act to be a transgression of the Sabbath law, or forbade divorce on any but the one ground of adultery; the school of Hillel *loosed* when it set men free from the obligations thus imposed. Here, too, the after-work of Peter was an illustration of the meaning of the words. When he resisted the attempt of the Judaisers to "put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples" (Acts xv. 10), he was *loosing* what was also loosed in heaven. When he proclaimed, as in his Epistle, the eternal laws of righteousness, and holiness, and love, he was *binding* those laws on the conscience of Christendom. It must be remembered, lastly, that the power thus bestowed on him was conferred afterward (xviii. 18) on the whole company of the Apostles, or, more probably, on the whole body of the disciples in their collective unity, and there with an implied extension to partially judicial functions (see Note on xviii. 18).

A few words will, it is believed, be sufficient to set the claims and the controversies which have had their starting-point in these words on their right footing. It may be briefly noted (1) that it is at least doubtful (not to claim too much for the interpretation given above) whether the man Peter was the rock on which the Church was to be built; (2) that it is doubtful (though this is not the place to discuss the question) whether Peter was ever in any real sense Bishop of the Church of Rome, or in any way connected with its foundation; (3) that there is not a syllable pointing to the transmission of the power conferred on him to his successors in that supposed Episcopate; (4) as just stated, that the power was not given to him alone, but equally to all the disciples; (5) that the power of the keys, no less than that of "binding" and "loosing," was not sacerdotal, but belonged to the office of a scribe or teacher. As a matter of interpretation, the Romish argument from this verse stands on a level with that which sees the supremacy of the successors of St. Peter in the "two great lights" of Gen. i. 16, or the "two swords" of Luke xxii. 38. The claims of the Church of Rome rest, such as they are, on the greatness of her history, on her association with the imperial city, on the work done by her as the "light of the wide West" in ages of darkness, on the imposing aspect of her imagined unity; but to build them upon the promise to Peter is but the idlest of fantastic dreams, fit only to find its place in that Limbo of vanities which contains, among other abortive or morbid growths, the monstrosities of interpretation.

(20) **Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man.**—We may venture to analyse what we may reverently call the motives of this reticence. Had the disciples gone about, not only as proclaiming the kingdom and as preachers of repentance, but sounding the watchword that the Christ had come, it might not have been difficult for them to gather round Him the homage of excited crowds. It

should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

(21) From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. (22) Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. (23) But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

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was not such homage, however, that He sought, but that which had its root in a deeper faith. It tended to present a false aspect of His kingdom to the minds of men; it tended also to prevent the consummation to which He was now directing the thoughts of His disciples as the necessary condition of His entering on the glory of His kingdom. The zeal of the multitude to make him a king after their own fashion (John vi. 15) was what He deprecated and shunned.

(21) **From that time forth began Jesus.**—The prominence given to the prediction shows that it came upon the minds of the disciples as something altogether new. They had failed to understand the mysterious hints of the future which we find in, "Destroy this temple" (John ii. 19), in the Son of Man being "lifted up" (John iii. 14), in the sign of the prophet "Jonas" (xii. 39; xvi. 4). Now the veil is uplifted, and the order of events is plainly foretold—the entry into Jerusalem, the rejection, the condemnation, the death, the resurrection. It is obvious that if we accept the record as true the prediction is one which implies a foreknowledge that is at least supernatural, and is so far evidence of a divine mission, if not also of a divine nature in the speaker. And it may well be urged that in this case the incidents which surround the prediction—as, *e.g.*, Peter's protest, and the rebuke addressed to him in such striking contrast with the previous promise—have a character of originality and unexpectedness which negatives the hypothesis of its being a prophecy after the event. On the other hand, the fact that the disciples did not take in the meaning of the prediction as to His rising from the dead may, in its turn, be pleaded in bar of the assumption that the prophecy lingered in men's minds, and suggested the belief in a mythical, in the absence of a real, fulfilment.

(22) **Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.**—It is obvious that the mind of the disciple dwelt on the former, not the latter part of the prediction. The death was plain and terrible to him, for he failed to grasp the idea of the resurrection. The remonstrance would perhaps have been natural at any time, but the contrast between this prediction and the tone of confidence and triumph in the previous promise doubtless intensified its vehemence. Personal love for his Lord, his own desire to share in the glory which that promise had implied, were united in his refusal to accept this as the issue towards which they were tending.

**Be it far from thee, Lord.**—The words are a paraphrase rather than a translation of the original. Literally, the words are an abbreviated prayer, "(*God be*) merciful to Thee," the name of God, as in our colloquial "Mercy on us!" being omitted. The phrase is of frequent occurrence in the Greek version of the Old Testament, as, *e.g.*, in Exod. xxxii. 12; Num. xiv. 19; Deut. xxi. 8. It is almost idle to attempt to trace a distinctly formulated thought in the sudden utterance of sorrow and alarm, but so far as the words go they seem of the nature of a protest against what seemed to the disciple a causeless despondency, a dark view of the future, at variance alike with his own expectations and what seemed to him the meaning of his Master's previous words. The words that followed were, however, more than a prayer, "This shall not be unto Thee," as though his power to bind and to loose extended even to the region of his Master's work and the means by which it was to be accomplished.

(23) **He turned, and said to Peter.**—St. Mark adds, significantly, "when He had turned about and looked on His disciples." They, we may believe, stood behind, watching the effect of the remonstrance which Peter had uttered as their spokesman, and therefore, the Lord reading their thoughts, the rebuke, though addressed to him, was spoken so that they too might hear.

**Get thee behind me, Satan.**—The sharpness of the words indicates a strong and intense emotion. The chief of the Apostles was addressed in the self-same terms as those which had been spoken to the Tempter (see Note on Matt. iv. 10). It was, indeed, nothing less than a renewal of the same temptation. In this suggestion, that He might gain the crown without the cross, and attain a kingdom of this world as the princes of the world obtain their kingdoms, the Christ saw the recurrence of the temptation which had offered Him the glory of those kingdoms on condition of His drawing back from the path which the Father had appointed for Him, with the associations that had gathered round its original.

**Thou art an offence unto me.**—The Greek word is, of course, to be taken as meaning a stumbling-block, an impediment. So taken, it presents a suggestive contrast to the previous promise. Peter is still a *stone*, but it is as "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence" (Isa. viii. 14; 1 Pet. ii. 8). He is hindering, not forwarding his Master's work. For one who loved his Lord as Peter did—his very love in this instance prompting the rash words—this was at once the sharpest and yet the tenderest, and therefore the most effective, rebuke that could have been uttered.

**Thou savourest not the things that be of God.**—The verb, though found in all English versions from Wiclif downwards, and suggested by the *sapis* of the Vulgate, was never a very happy one, and is now so archaic as to be misleading. It may help us to understand it, to remember that our *savour* and the French *savoir* are both forms derived from the Latin *sapere*, and that the translators were so far justified in using it to describe a mental state, or rather act. Elsewhere the word is rendered "mind," or "set affection on," as, *e.g.*, "*mind* the things of the flesh," or "of the spirit" (Rom. viii. 5), and "*set your affection* on things above" (Col. iii. 2); and this is obviously a more satisfactory rendering. Peter's sin lay in the fact that his mind was set on the things of earth, its outward pomp and pageantry, measuring the future by a human not a divine standard.

It is hardly a needless divergence from the work of mere interpretation to suggest that the weakness of

(24) Then said Jesus unto his disciples,[a] If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. (25) For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. (26) For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (27) For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.[b] (28) Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here,[c] which shall not

[a] ch. 10. 38. Mark 8. 34.

[b] Ps. 62. 12; Rom. 2. 6.

[c] Mark 9. 1; Luke 9. 27.

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Peter has been again and again reproduced in the history of Christendom at large, most conspicuously in the history of the Church which rests its claims on the greatness of the Apostle's name. The annals of the Papacy, from the colossal sovereignty, which formed the ideal of Hildebrand, down to the last struggle for temporal power, is but the record of the zeal not according to knowledge of those who "savoured not the things that be of God, but those that be of man." So far as this was so, they were working, though they knew it not, for evil and not for good, even as the chief of the Apostles when he thus became of one mind with the spirit of the world, which is also the spirit of the Tempter, placed himself for the moment on a level with the disciple whom our Lord had hinted at as a "devil," because the seeds of treachery and greed of gain were already working in his soul (John vi. 70).

(24) **Then said Jesus unto his disciples.**—St. Mark adds that He "called the multitude with the disciples," and St. Luke's "he said unto all" implies something of the same kind. The teaching as to the unworldliness of His kingdom which the disciples so much needed was to be generalised in its widest possible extent. Those who were following Him, as many did, in idle wonder, or with the desire of earthly greatness, must do so knowing its conditions.

**If any man will come after me.**—The "will" is more than a mere auxiliary; "*willeth*," "desireth" to come after.

**Let him deny himself, and take up his cross.**—Our common thoughts of "self-denial," *i.e.*, the denial *to* ourselves of some pleasure or profit, fall far short of the meaning of the Greek. The man is to deny his whole self, all his natural motives and impulses, so far as they come into conflict with the claims of Christ. If he does not so deny himself, he is in danger, as Peter was (it is significant that the same word is used in both instances), of denying his Lord. The self-denial here commanded has, accordingly, its highest type and pattern in the act by which the Son of God, in becoming man, "emptied Himself (see Note on Phil. ii. 7) of all that constituted, if we may so speak, the "self" of His divine nature. The words "take up his cross," which the disciples had heard before (see Note on x. 38), were now clothed with a new and more distinct meaning, by the words that spoke so clearly of the death of which the cross was to be the instrument.

(25) **Whosoever will save his life, . . . . whosoever will lose his life . . . .**—There is a subtle distinction between the two clauses in the Greek which the English fails to represent. "Whosoever *willeth*—*i.e.*, wishes—to save his life" (the construction being the same as in verse 24) in the first clause, "Whosoever shall lose his life" in the second. It is as though it was felt that no man could wish to lose his life for the sake of losing it, though he might be ready, if called on, to surrender it. The word rendered "life" is the same as "the soul" of the next verse. For the most part, it means the former rather than the latter with its modern associations, and is never used as a simple equivalent for the *spirit* of man as the heir of immortality. Strictly speaking, it is the animating principle of the natural as distinguished from the spiritual life. Man, in the fuller trichotomy of the New Testament, consists of "body, soul, and spirit" (1 Thess. v. 23), the soul being the connecting-link between the other two. The truth is, of course, put in the form of a paradox, and hence, with a contrast between the two aspects of the soul, or *psyche*. To be bent on saving it in its relation to the body, is to lose it in its relation to the higher life of spirit; to be content to part with it in its lower aspect, is to gain it back again in the higher.

(26) **What is a man profited . . . ?**—It is not without a purpose that what may be called the argument of expediency is here brought in. Even the self-denial of verse 24 does not exclude the thought, for those who are still within the range of its influence, of what, in the long-run, will profit us most. There is a self-love which, in spite of the strained language of an exaggerated and unreal philanthropy, is ennobling and not debasing.

**In exchange for his soul.**—The English introduces an apparent antithesis of language (as has just been noticed) in place of the identity of the original. It would be better to keep "life" in both verses. If there is no profit in bartering even the lower life for the whole world, how much less in bartering the higher,

> Et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas !

And when that forfeiture has been incurred, what price can he then pay to buy it back again? No. "It costs more to redeem their souls, so that he must let that alone for ever" (Ps. xlix. 8, Prayer Book version).

(27) **For the Son of man shall come.**—The fact stands in a logical relation to the preceding verse. The fact that the Son of Man is about to come to execute judgment, clothes its abstract statement with an awful certainty. No bribe can be offered to the Eternal Judge to change the sentence of forfeiture if that forfeiture has been rightfully incurred. From first to last in our Lord's teaching (*e.g.*, for its earlier stages, vii. 23, 24; John v. 26, 27) this claim to be the future Judge of all men is never absent. It is asserted in every great discourse, implied in almost every parable.

**With his angels.**—We are justified by chap. xxv. 31 in referring the possessive pronoun to Christ rather than the Father. "All things that the Father hath are Mine" (John xvi. 15), and among these the angels that do His pleasure.

**His works.**—The better MSS. give a word in the singular, his *doing* or *conduct*. The sentence is made to depend on the collective character of what has been done rather than on the multitude of individual acts.

(28) **There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death . . .**—The immediate sequence of the vision of the Son of Man transfigured

taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

CHAPTER XVII.—(1) And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,[a] (2) and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

[a] Mark 9. 2; Luke 9. 28.

A.D. 32.

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from the low estate in which He then lived and moved, into the "excellent glory" which met the gaze of the three disciples, has led not a few interpreters to see in that vision the fulfilment of this prediction. A closer scrutiny of the words must, however, lead us to set aside that interpretation, except so far as the Transfiguration bore witness to what had till then been the latent possibilities of His greatness. To speak of something that was to take place within six days as to occur before *some* of those who heard the words should taste of death (comp. John viii. 52, Heb. ii. 9, for the form of the expression) would hardly have been natural; nor does the vision, as such, satisfy the meaning of the words "coming in His kingdom." The solution of the problem is to be found in the great prophecy of chap. xxiv. In a sense which was real, though partial, the judgment which fell upon the Jewish Church, the destruction of the Holy City and the Temple, the onward march of the Church of Christ, was as the coming of the Son of Man in His kingdom. His people felt that He was not far off from every one of them. He had come to them in "spirit and in power," and that advent was at once the earnest and the foreshadowing of the "great far-off event," the day and hour of which were hidden from the angels of God, and even from the Son of Man Himself (Mark xiii. 32). The words find their parallel in those that declared that "This generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled" (xxiv. 34). That such words should have been recorded and published by the Evangelists is a proof either that they accepted that interpretation, if they wrote after the destruction of Jerusalem, or, if we assume that they were led by them to look for the "end of all things" as near at hand, that they wrote before the generation of those who then stood by had passed away; and so the very difficulty that has perplexed men becomes a proof of the early date of the three Gospels that contain the record.

## XVII.

(1) **After six days.**—St. Luke's "about eight days" (Luke ix. 28) may be noted as an example of the mode of reckoning which spoke of the interval between our Lord's death and resurrection, about six-and-thirty hours, as three days.

**Peter, James, and John.**—The three retain their position, as in the raising of Jairus's daughter, as the elect among the elect. (Comp. also chap. xxvi. 37; Mark xiii. 3.) Looking to the grouping of the Apostles it might have seemed natural that Andrew also should have been there, but his character seems to have been always retiring, and, it may be, was wanting in the intensity of faith which belonged to his brother, the Rock-Apostle, and to the two Sons of Thunder.

**Into an high mountain.**—A tradition of uncertain date fixes on Tabor as the scene of the Transfiguration, but this was probably due to the conspicuous position of that mountain, as it rises abruptly from the plain of Esdraelon. The Gospel narratives leave the locality altogether uncertain, but as Cæsarea Philippi was the last place mentioned, and a journey through Galilee follows (Mark ix. 30), it is more probable that the scene is to be found on one of the heights of Hermon. Tabor, it may be added, was crowned with a fortress, which at this time was likely to be occupied, and this is obviously inconsistent with the solitude which the narrative implies.

(2) **And was transfigured before them.**—Elsewhere in the New Testament (with the exception of the parallel, Mark ix. 2) the word is used only in its spiritual sense, and is there rendered "transformed." St. Luke does not use the word, but describes the change which it implies, "the fashion of His countenance became other than it had been" (ix. 29). He adds the profoundly significant fact that this was while He was in the act of prayer. It was in that act of communion with His Father that the divine glory flowed out into visible brightness. Transcendent as the manifestation was, it has its lower analogies in the radiance which made the face of Stephen "as the face of an angel" (Acts vi. 15); yet more in the glory which shone on the face of Moses when he came down from the mount (Ex. xxxiv. 29); in some faint measure, in what may be called the metamorphic power of prayer which invests features that have no form or comeliness with the rapture of devout ecstacy. And it is no over-bold speculation to see in the fact thus noted that which gives its meaning to the Transfiguration as a stage in the training of the disciples. Prayers like those which were offered for Peter that his "faith might not fail" (Luke xxii. 31, 32) at least suggest something as to the intercession of the Master for His disciples, and this, we must remember, was a crisis in their spiritual history. They had risen to the highest faith; they had been offended by the announcement of His rejection, His sufferings, His death. Something was needed which might sustain their faith, on which they might look back in after years as the earnest of a future glory. It was well for them that they should, at least once in His life of lowliness, gaze on the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father (John i. 14), and feel that they were not "following cunningly-devised fables," but had been "eye-witnesses of His majesty" (2 Pet. i. 16). To those who believe that our Lord's human nature was in very deed, sin only excepted, like unto ours, it will not seem over-bold to suggest that for Him too this might have been a time of conflict and of trial, a renewal of the Temptation in the wilderness (chap. xvi. 23), an anticipation of that of the agony of Gethsemane, and that even for Him, in his humanity, there might be in the excellent glory and in the voice from heaven the help and comfort which strengthened Him for the cross and passion. Following the narrative in its details, we may trace its several stages in some such sequence as follows:—After six days, spent apparently with their Lord in the mountain district near Cæsarea Philippi, but not in the work of preaching or working miracles, the rest of the disciples are left at the foot of the mountain, and the three follow Him, as the evening closes, to its summit. There, as afterwards in Gethsemane, He withdraws from them "about a stone's throw" (Luke xxii. 41), and they "watch with Him," and gaze on Him, as He, standing or kneeling (the first was, we must remember, the more common attitude of prayer, Luke xviii. 11), intercedes for them and for Israel, and,

(3) And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. (4) Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. (5) While he yet spake,[a] behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is

[a] 2 Pet. i. 17.

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we may add, for mankind. And then, as they gaze, form and features shine with a new glory, bright as the sun, as though the Shechinah cloud had wrapt Him round. Even His garments are "white as the light," "white as snow" (the reading in St. Mark is doubtful, but if genuine the snows of Hermon may have suggested the comparison), as St. Mark adds with his usual descriptive vividness, "so as no fuller on earth can whiten them." Nothing, however, it may be added, suggests the vision of three forms floating in the air with which Raffaelle's glorious picture has made us familiar.

(3) **Moses and Elias.**—The identification of the forms which the disciples saw was, we may well believe, intuitive. If we accept the narrative as a whole, it is legitimate to assume that, in the state of consciousness to which they had been raised, they were capable of a spiritual illumination which would reveal to them who they were who were thus recognising their Master's work and doing homage to His majesty. There was, it is obvious, a singular fitness in each case. One was the great representative of the Law, which was a "schoolmaster" or "servant-tutor" (see Note on Gal. iii. 24) leading men to Christ, the other of the whole goodly fellowship of the prophets. Of one it had been said that a "Prophet like unto him" should come in the latter days (Deut. xviii. 18), to whom men should hearken; of the other, that he should come again to "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children" (Mal. iv. 5). The close of the ministry of each was not after the "common death of all men." No man knew of the sepulchre of Moses (Deut. xxxiv. 6), and Elijah had passed away in the chariots and horses of fire (2 Kings ii. 11). Both were associated in men's minds with the glory of the kingdom of the Christ. The Jerusalem Targum on Ex. xii. connects the coming of Moses with that of the Messiah. Another Jewish tradition predicts his appearance with that of Elijah. Their presence now was an attestation that their work was over, and that the Christ had come.

**Talking with him.**—St. Luke (ix. 31) adds the subject of their communing: "They spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem." So far as the disciples then entered into the meaning of what they heard, or afterwards recalled it, it was a witness that the spirits of the lawgiver and the prophet accepted the sufferings and the death which had shaken the faith of the disciples as the necessary conditions of the Messianic kingdom. It is significant that the word for "decease" (*exodos*) reappears in this sense once only in the New Testament, and then in close connection with a reference to the Transfiguration (2 Pet. i. 15).

(4) **Lord, it is good for us to be here.**—For "Lord" St. Luke has "Master;" St. Mark (giving, probably, as elsewhere, the very word uttered) "Rabbi." It is not easy to trace the thoughts that passed rapidly through the soul of the disciple in that moment of amazement. Afterwards—if we may judge from St. Mark's account (ix. 6), "he knew not what to answer, for they were sore afraid," or St. Luke's (ix. 33) "not knowing what he said"—he could hardly explain them himself. We may venture to see in the very *naïveté* of the words a touch of originality and unexpectedness which, as far as it goes, attests the truthfulness of the narrative. What the words seem to imply is:—(1) An abounding joy at being thus brought into a glory which fulfilled the Apostle's brightest hopes. It was, indeed, good to be thus carried, as it were, into Paradise, or the third heaven, and to hear there words which human lips might not reproduce. (2) His thoughts travelled back to the records of the Exodus, when the Lord talked with Moses in the tabernacle (Ex. xxxiii. 7—10). What if like tabernacles could now be made for those three glorious forms, that all Israel might come and gaze, and hear and worship? Would not this be a better consummation than the shame and death at Jerusalem? Would it not meet the belief of the scribes and of the people that "Elias must first come"?

(5) **A bright cloud overshadowed them**—*i.e.*, our Lord, Moses, and Elias. To the disciples this would, we cannot doubt, recall the "cloudy pillar" which had descended on the first tabernacle (Ex. xxxiii. 9), the "cloud that filled the house of the Lord on the dedication of the Temple" (1 Kings viii. 10). It was, in later Jewish language, the Shechinah, or abiding presence of Jehovah—the very form of the word connects it with both the Hebrew (*mishkan*) and the Greek (*skenė*) words for tabernacle—which was the symbol that He was with His people. The Targums, or Paraphrases, of the Law and Prophets which were then current, had used the word as a synonym for the divine name. Where the Hebrew text had had "I will dwell in thee," the Targum of Jonathan had "I will make my Shechinah to dwell" (Zech. ii. 10; viii. 3). Its appearance at this moment, followed by the voice out of the cloud, was a witness that no tabernacle made with hands was now needed, that the humanity of Christ was the true tabernacle of God (comp. Note on John i. 14), and that it was in this sense true that "the tabernacle of God was with men" (Rev. xxi. 3), and that He would dwell with them.

**This is my beloved Son.**—The words were in substance the same as those heard at the baptism of our Lord (see Note on Matt. iii. 17), but the difference in their form is suggestive. Then they were addressed to the human consciousness of the Son of Man, as declaring to Him the greatness of His being. Now they come addressed as to the disciples, and in close connection with the "decease" which was to be accomplished at Jerusalem. It was, if we may so speak, because the Son of Man became obedient unto death that He was showing Himself worthy of the Father's love. In the hour of darkness and seeming failure, and agony and death, He was "satisfying" His Father's "good pleasure," and accepted by Him as the one perfect sacrifice. And so the command, "Hear ye Him," gained a new significance. Not the traditions of the elders, or the doctrines of the scribes and Pharisees, not even the teaching of Moses and Elias, of the Law and of the Prophets, but the words of the Son of Man, were henceforth to command their allegiance, and to be the guide of their faith and of their lives, for of them only it was true that the Father was revealed fully in them (Heb. i. 1, 2), and that they should never pass away (xxiv. 35).

my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. (6) And when the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. (7) And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. (8) And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. (9) And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead. (10) And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?[a] (11) And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall

[a] ch. 11. 14; Mark 9. 11.

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(6) **When the disciples heard it.**—At this point St. Matthew's narrative is the fullest. The three disciples shrink in fear, like that of the Israelites at the brightness of Moses' face (Ex. xxxiv. 30), like that of the priests in the Temple who could not stand to minister because of the cloud (1 Kings viii. 11), and lie prostrate on the ground in speechless terror. They have seen the glory of the Lord: can they hear His voice and live?

(7) **Jesus came and touched them.**—Act and words were both expressive of an almost brotherly tenderness. The touch of the hand they had so often grasped—as, *e.g.*, in xiv. 31—the familiar words that had brought courage to their fainting hearts in the hour of danger (xiv. 27), these recall them again to the realities of life. They need not fear the glory of the divine Presence, for He is with them still as its most perfect manifestation.

(8) **They saw no man, save Jesus only.**—The words, following as they do upon the "Be not afraid," imply a marked contrast to Peter's rash utterance. It was *not* "good" for frail men such as they were to tarry long in the immediate glory of the Presence. It was a relief to see "Jesus only" with them, as they had been wont to see Him. So in our own lives, moments of spiritual ecstasy are few and far between, and it is good for us that it should be so, and that we should be left to carry the fragrance and power of their memory into the work of our common life, and the light of our common day.

It may not be amiss to say a few words as to the credibility of a narrative which is in itself so wonderful, and has been exposed so often to the attacks of a hostile criticism. And (1) it is obvious that what is commonly known as the rationalistic method of interpretation is altogether inapplicable here. The narrative of the Evangelists cannot by any artifice be reduced to a highly-coloured version of some natural phenomenon falling under known laws. If accepted at all, it must be accepted as belonging to the region of the supernatural. (2) The so-called mythical theory, which sees in such narratives the purely legendary after-growth of the dreaming fancies of a later age, is of course possible here, as it is possible wherever the arbitrary criticism which postulates the incredibility of the supernatural chooses to apply it; but it may, at least, be urged against its application in this instance that there was nothing in the Jewish expectations of the Messiah likely to suggest such a legend, and that the circumstances connected with it are such (*e.g.*, its association with our Lord's sufferings, and the strange, abrupt utterance of Peter) as were hardly likely to suggest themselves either to the popular imagination or to that of an individual mind. (3) The position which it occupies both in our Lord's ministry and the spiritual training of the disciples, while, on the one hand, it raises the Transfiguration above the region of a mere marvel, is, it may be urged again, such as was not likely to occur to a simple lover of the marvellous. (4) Lastly, the language of John i. 14 and (though with less certainty, owing to the doubt which hangs over the genuineness of that Epistle) of 2 Peter i. 16, may surely be allowed some evidential weight, as being of the nature of allusive reference to a fact which the writers take for granted as generally known. Over and above St. Peter's direct reference, we note the recurrence of the words "decease," "tabernacle," as suggested by it (2 Pet. i. 13, 15).

(9) **Tell the vision to no man.**—The command obviously included even the rest of the Apostles within the range of its prohibition. For them in their lower stage of spiritual growth, the report of the vision at second hand would either have led them to distrust it or to pervert its meaning. Whatever reasons excluded them from being spectators were of still greater weight for the time against their hearing of what had been seen from others. The Greek word for "vision," it may be noted, means simply "what they had seen," and does not suggest, as the English word does, the thought of a dream-state in the beholders.

(10) **His disciples asked him.**—The context clearly implies that the question came not from the disciples at large, but from the three who had seen the vision, and were brooding over the appearance, and yet more, perhaps, the disappearance, of Elijah, as connected with the tradition of the scribes. If Elijah was to come and prepare the way, why had he thus come from the unseen world for a moment only?

(11) **Elias truly shall first come.**—Better, *cometh.* Our Lord's words are obviously enigmatic in their form, and, as such, admit of two very different interpretations. Taken literally, as they have been by very many both in earlier and later times, they seem to say that Elijah shall come in person before the yet future day of the Lord, the great second Advent of the Christ. So it has been argued the prophecy of Mal. iv. 5 shall yet have a literal fulfilment, and John the Baptist when he confessed that he was not Elijah (John i. 21) was rightly expecting his appearance. It would hardly be right to reject this interpretation merely on the ground of its literalism, or its improbability, or the resemblance which it has to the fantastic belief and practices, which have kept their ground even in modern Judaism, in connection with the expected appearance of the Tishbite, though these, so far as they go, must be thrown into the adverse scale. The words that follow in the next verse are, however, more decisive.

**And restore all things.**—Better, *and shall restore.* Leaving for the present the question who was to do the work, we turn to the nature of the work itself. Our Lord's language generalises the description given by Malachi. That work of "turning the hearts of the children to the fathers, and the hearts of the fathers to the children," was but part of a wider restoration of things and persons. Old truths were to be reproclaimed, and cleared from the after-growths of traditions. Men, as a race, were to be brought into their right relation to their God and Father. The first come, and restore all things. (12) But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. (13) Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

(14) And when they were come to the multitude,[a] there came to him a *certain* man, kneeling down to him, and saying, (15) Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. (16) And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not

[a] Mark 9. 17; Luke 9. 38.

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words seem—at least as interpreted by Acts iii. 21 (where see Note); Rom. viii. 21; Eph. i. 22, 23; 1 Cor. xv. 28, and other like passages—to point forward to a "restitution of all things," the bringing in of order where now there is disorder and confusion, which shall embrace not Israel only, or even mankind, but the whole universe of God, visible and invisible.

(12) **Elias is come already.**—These words, the emphatic repetition of what had been said before in chap. xi. 14 (see Note there), ought, it is believed, to be decisive as to the issue raised in the preceding verse. So far as the prophecy of Malachi required the coming of Elijah, that prophecy had been fulfilled in the Baptist, all unconscious of it as he was, as coming in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke i. 17). The disciples need not look for any other personal appearance. The use of the present and future tenses in verse 11 point to a deeper truth, which they were to learn afterwards. The Elijah ministry, the work of the preacher of repentance, is not a transient phenomenon belonging to one stage only of the Church's history, but was to be, throughout the ages, on to the end of all things, the indispensable preparation for the coming of the Lord. Only through it could all things be restored, and the path made ready for the heralds of forgiveness and of peace.

**They knew him not.**—The Greek word implies full and accurate knowledge. Better, perhaps, *they recognised him not.* Must we not say that those who, after these words, still look forward to the personal advent of Elijah are unconsciously placing themselves on a level with those whose dimness of perception our Lord thus condemns?

**But have done unto him whatsoever they listed.**—Literally, *they did in him* (in him, *i.e.*, as the region in which their will wrought) *whatsoever they would.* To "list," now practically archaic, was the same as "lust," without the special evil sense which has attached to the latter word. It is significant that our Lord charges the guilt of the rejection and death of John upon the scribes and the people at large, with no special reference to the Tetrarch Antipas. The passions and intrigues of the palace were but instruments working out the intent of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

**Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.**—Another instance of what may be called the new colour which from the time of the Transfiguration spreads over our Lord's teaching. All is, in one aspect, darker, sadder, more sombre. He is drawing nearer to the cross, and He brings the thought of the cross closer to the minds of the disciples.

(13) **Then the disciples understood.**—The words are suggestive both as indicating the conclusion in which they ultimately rested, and the frankness with which they owned how slowly they had passed from the literalism of the scribes to a true apprehension of the spiritual meaning of the prophecy in question.

(14) **And when they were come to the multitude.**—St. Luke states that it was on the next day, the night having apparently been spent on the Mount of Transfiguration. The magic power of the art of Raffaelle has brought into vivid juxtaposition the contrast between the scene of glory above and that of trouble and unrest below, but we must not allow the impression made by the picture to distort our thoughts of the history. The two scenes did not synchronise. The vision was at night, and the descent from the mountain would have carried those who made the journey some way at least into the day that followed.

**There came to him a certain man.**—St. Mark (ix. 14—16) narrates more fully that as our Lord and the three were coming to the disciples, they saw a crowd, and scribes disputing with them; that when the multitude saw this they were astonished, and running to Him, saluted Him; that He then asked, "Why dispute ye with them?" and that this drew forth the answer and the prayer which in St. Matthew's record stands without any prelude.

(15) **Lunatick.**—See Note on iv. 24. The other Gospels add some further touches. The boy had a "dumb spirit." When the spirit seized him it "tore him," and he foamed at the mouth, and gnashed with his teeth. Slowly, and as with difficulty, the paroxysm passed off, and the sufferer was wasting away under the violence of the attacks. The phenomena described are, it need hardly be said, those of epilepsy complicated with insanity, a combination common in all countries, and likely to be aggravated where the "seizure," which the very word epilepsy implies, was the work of a supernatural power. A prolonged melancholy, an indescribable look of sadness, a sudden falling, and loss of consciousness, with or without convulsions, or passing into a tetanic stiffness, a periodical recurrence coinciding often with the new or full moon (hence probably the description of the boy as "lunatick"), grinding the teeth, foaming at the mouth, are all noted by medical writers as symptoms of the disease. The names by which it was known in the earlier stages of medical science were all indicative of the awe with which men looked on it. It was the "divine," the "sacred" disease, as being a direct supernatural infliction. The Latin synonym, *morbus comitialis*, came from the fact that if a seizure of this kind occurred during the *comitia*, or assemblies of the Roman Republic, it was looked upon as of such evil omen that the meeting was at once broken up, and all business adjourned. Whether there was in this case something more than disease, viz., a distinct possession by a supernatural force, is a question which belongs to the general subject of the "demoniacs" of the Gospel records. (See Note on viii. 28.) Here, at any rate, our Lord's words (verse 21) assume, even more emphatically than elsewhere, the reality of the possession. (See Mark ix. 25.)

(16) **They could not cure him.**—This, then, would seem to have been the subject-matter of debate. The scribes were taunting the disciples, who had probably trusted to their use of the wonted formula of their Master's name, and were now wrangling in their own defence. Neither scribes nor disciples had thought of

cure him. (17) Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. (18) And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. (19) Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? (20) And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed,[a] ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. (21) Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

[a] Luke 17. 6.

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gaining the spiritual power which might avail by the means which they both recognised as effective.

(17) **O faithless and perverse generation.**—The words were obviously addressed both to the scribes and the disciples. Both had shown their want of the faith which utters itself in prayer to the Father; both were alike "perverse," in finding in the misery brought before them only an occasion of wrangling and debate. This was not the way to obtain the power to heal, and the formulæ of exorcism were but as an idle charm, without the faith of which they were meant to be the expression.

**How long shall I suffer you?**—The words are significant as suggesting the thought that our Lord's whole life was one long tolerance of the waywardness and perversity of men.

**Bring him hither to me.**—St. Mark, whose record is here by far the fullest, relates that at this moment "the spirit tare him," and that he "wallowed foaming," in the paroxysm of a fresh convulsion; that our Lord then asked, "How long is it ago since this came unto him?" and was told that he had suffered from his childhood; that the father appealed, half-despairing, to our Lord's pity, "If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us;" and was told that it depended on his own faith, "If thou canst believe; all things are possible to him that believeth;" and then burst out into the cry of a faith struggling with his despair, "Lord, I believe; help Thou my unbelief;" and that that faith, weak as it was, was accepted as sufficient.

(18) **Jesus rebuked the devil.**—Better, *demon*, as elsewhere in these cases of possession.

**The child was cured.**—Better, the *boy*. Mark ix. 21 implies, as indeed the Greek does here, that the sufferer had passed beyond the age of childhood. St. Mark gives the words of the rebuke, "Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I command thee, come out from him, and enter no more into him." This was followed by a great cry and another convulsion; then he fell down, "as it were, dead," and many cried out, "He is dead." Then Jesus took him by the hand, and raised him up, and the work of healing was accomplished. Calmness, and peace, and self-possession were seen instead of the convulsive agony. The spiritual power of the Healer had overcome the force, whether morbid or demoniac, which was the cause of his sufferings. Our Lord's words, it need hardly be said, assume it to have been the latter; and those who deny the reality of the possession must, in their turn, assume either that He shared the belief of the people, or accepted it because they were not able to receive any other explanation of the mysterious sufferings which they had witnessed. Each hypothesis presents difficulties of its own, and we may well be content to confess our inability to solve them. (See Note on chap. viii. 28.) Speaking generally, the language of the New Testament seems to recognise, if not in all diseases, yet at least in all that disturb the moral equilibrium of man's nature, an infraction of the divine order, and therefore rightly sees in them the work, directly or indirectly, of the great antagonist of that order. All our Lord's works of mercy are summed up by St. Peter in the words that "He went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil" (Acts x. 38), and on this supposition the particular phenomena of each case were logically ascribed to demoniac forces.

(19) **Why could not we cast him out?**—The question came obviously from the disciples who had been left below when our Lord went apart with Peter, James, and John, to the Mount of the Transfiguration. They did not even now see the reason of their failure. They had dealt with this case as they had dealt with others. Why had they not met with a like issue? They did not as yet perceive that they came under our Lord's language of rebuke, and did not look on themselves as belonging to the "faithless generation."

(20) **Because of your unbelief.**—The various-reading, "Because of your little faith," found in many, but not the most authoritative MSS., is interesting as an example of a tendency to tone down the apparent severity of our Lord's words. They show conclusively that the disciples themselves came under the range of His rebuke to the "faithless and perverse generation."

**If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed.**—The hyperbolical form of our Lord's words, repeated afterwards in xxi. 21, excluded from the thoughts of the disciples, as from our own, the possibility of a literal interpretation. The "grain of mustard seed" was, as in xiii. 31, the proverbial type of the infinitely little. To "remove mountains" was, as we see in 1 Cor. xiii. 2 (this may, however, have been an echo of our Lord's teaching), the proverbial type of overcoming difficulties that seemed insurmountable. The words were, we may believe, dramatised by a gesture pointing to the mountain from which our Lord and the three disciples had descended, as afterwards by a like act in reference to the Mount of Olives (xxi. 21).

**Nothing shall be impossible unto you.**—The words, absolute as they sound, are yet, *ipso facto*, conditional. Nothing that comes within the range of faith in the wisdom and love of God, and therefore of submission to His will, is beyond the range of prayer.

(21) **This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.**—The words imply degrees in the intensity of the forms of evil ascribed to demons amounting to a generic difference. Some might yield before the energy of a human will, and the power of the divine Name, and the prayers even of a weak faith. Some, like that which comes before us here, required a greater intensity of the spiritual life, to be gained by the "prayer and fasting" of which our Lord speaks. The circumstances of the case render it probable that our Lord himself had vouchsafed to fulfil both the conditions. The disciples, we know, did not as yet fast (ix. 14, 15), and the facts imply that they had been weak and remiss in prayer. The words are noticeable

(22) And while they abode in Galilee,[a] Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: (23) and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.

(24) And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money[1] came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? (25) He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? (26) Peter saith

[a] ch. 20. 17; Mark 9. 31; Luke 9. 44.

[1] Called in the original *didrachma*, being in value fifteen pence.

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as testifying to the real ground and motive for "fasting," and to the gain for the higher life to be obtained, when it was accompanied by true prayer, by this act of conquest over the lower nature. So St. Peter's vision (Acts x. 9, 10), and the appointment of Paul and Barnabas by the direct guidance of the Spirit (Acts xiii. 2), are both connected with fasting. And St. Paul, besides the "hunger and thirst" that came upon him as the incidents of his mission-work, speaks of himself as "in fastings often" (2 Cor. xi. 27).

(22) **While they abode in Galilee.**—Better, *as they went to and fro.* The journeyings were apparently, like that to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon (chap. xv. 21), unconnected with the work of His ministry. Our Lord was still, as before, taking His disciples apart by themselves, and training them by fuller disclosures of His coming passion. "He would not that any man should know" of their presence (Mark ix. 30), for at that crisis, as was shown only too plainly by what followed, their minds were in a state of feverish excitement, which needed to be controlled and calmed. St. Luke adds (ix. 44) the solemn words with which this second announcement of His death was impressed on their thoughts, "Let these sayings sink down into your ears" (literally, *place these things*). The substance of what they heard was the same as before, but its repetition gave it a new force, as showing that it was not a mere foreboding of disaster, passing away with the mood of sadness in which it might have seemed to originate.

(23) **They were exceeding sorry.**—St. Mark (ix. 32) and St. Luke (ix. 45) add that "they understood not the saying; it was hid from them, that they should not perceive it;" and that "they were afraid to ask Him." Their sorrow was vague and dim, and they shrank from that which might make it more definite.

(24) **They that received tribute money.**—The word for tribute here is *didrachma*, and differs from that of verse 25 and xxii. 17. The latter is the *census*, or Roman poll-tax; the former was the Temple-rate, paid by every male Israelite above the age of twenty (Ex. xxx. 13—16; 2 Chron. xxiv. 9). It was fixed at a half-shekel a head, and the shekel being reckoned as equal to four Attic *drachmæ*, was known technically as the *didrachma* (Jos. *Ant.* iii. 8, § 2). It was collected even from the Jews in foreign countries, was paid into the *Corban*, or treasury of the Temple, and was used to defray the expenses of its services. After the destruction of Jerusalem, Vespasian ordered that it should still be collected as before, and, as if adding insult to injury, be paid to the fund for rebuilding the Temple of the Capitoline Jupiter (Jos. *Wars*, vii. 6, § 6). The three great festivals of the Jewish year were recognised as proper times for payment; and the relation of this narrative to John vii. makes it probable that the collectors were now calling in for the Feast of Tabernacles the payments that had not been made at the Passover or Pentecost previous. Their question implies that they half-thought that the Prophet of Nazareth had evaded or would disclaim payment. They were looking out for another transgression of the law, and as soon as He entered Capernaum (though He still held aloof from any public ministry), they tracked Him, probably to Peter's house, and put the question to His disciple. The narrative is remarkable both in itself and as found only in St. Matthew.

(25) **He saith, Yes.**—Peter's answer was ready enough. There was no need for him to inquire further. His Master would pay it now as He had paid it before (this is clearly implied), as every devout Israelite would pay. Both the application and the answer suggest the thought that our Lord was looked upon as domiciled in the house of Peter. The answer, however, was given without thought of the altered conditions of the case. He had not yet learnt to grasp the full meaning of the truth which he had himself so recently confessed.

**Jesus prevented him.**—Literally, *anticipated.* The word is nowhere else used of our Lord's teaching. Its significance is explained by what follows. Peter and the other disciples were about to come to Him with a question of a very different kind (xviii. 1), rising out of their mutual rivalries, and therefore, before that question could be asked, He anticipated the eager disciple that He might lead him on one step further into the mysteries of the kingdom.

**Take custom or tribute.**—The first word points to the duties on the export or import of goods, the *octroi*, in modern language, levied on provisions as they were brought in or out of towns; the second, as stated above, to the poll-tax paid into the Roman treasury, which followed on the taxing or registration of Luke ii. 2; Acts v. 37. Both were probably farmed by the capitalist *publicani*, and collected by the "publicans" of the Gospels, or other inferior officers.

**Of their own children, or of strangers?**—The first word can hardly be taken of merely natural relationship. The "children of the kingdom" (chap. xiii. 38) are not the king's sons, but his home-born, free subjects. The "strangers" were the aliens, the men of another race, who owned his sovereignty.

(26) **Of strangers.**—The answer must be looked at from the Eastern rather than the European theory of taxation. To the Jews, as to other Eastern nations, direct taxation was hateful as a sign of subjugation. It had roused them to revolt under Rehoboam (1 Kings xii. 4), and they had stoned the officer who was over the tribute. They had groaned under it when imposed by the Syrian kings (1 Macc. x. 29, 30; xi. 35). It was one of their grievances under Herod and his sons (Jos. *Ant.* xvii. 8, § 4). Judas of Galilee and his followers had headed an insurrection against it as imposed by the Romans (Acts v. 37). It was still (as we see in chap. xxii. 17) a moot point between the Pharisees and Herodians whether any Jew might lawfully pay it. Peter naturally answered our Lord's question at once from the popular Galilean view.

unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. (27) Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money:[1] that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

CHAPTER XVIII.—(1) At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus,[a] say-

[1] Or, *a stater*. It is half an ounce of silver, in value two shillings and sixpence, after five shillings the ounce.

A.D. 32.

[a] Mark 9. 33; Luke 9. 46.

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**Then are the children free.**—The words are commonly interpreted as simply reminding Peter of his confession, and pressing home its logical consequence that He, the Christ, as the Son of God, was not liable to the "tribute" which was the acknowledgment of His Father's sovereignty. This was doubtless prominent in the answer, but its range is, it is believed, wider. (1.) If this is the only meaning, then the Israelites who paid the rate are spoken of as "aliens," or "foreigners," in direct opposition to the uniform language of Scripture as to their filial relation to Jehovah. (2.) The plural used not only in this verse but in that which follows, the "lest *we* should offend them," the payment for Peter as well as for Himself, all indicate that we are dealing with a general truth of wide application. Some light is thrown upon the matter by a fact of contemporary history. The very point which our Lord decides had been debated between the Pharisees and Sadducees. The Temple-rate question was to them what the Church-rate question has been in modern politics. After a struggle of seven days in the Sanhedrin, the Pharisees carried their point, made it (what it had not been before) a compulsory payment, and kept an annual festival in commemoration of their victory. Our Lord, placing the question on its true ground, pronounces judgment against the Pharisees on this as on other points. They were placing the Israelite on the level of a "stranger," not of a "son." The true law for "the children of the kingdom" was that which St. Paul afterwards proclaimed: "not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. ix 7).

(27) **Lest we should offend them.**—Those who note the finer shades of language, can scarcely fail to trace in these words the tone of what we should describe in a human teacher as a half-playful, half-serious irony. When they were last at Capernaum, the disciples, Peter probably their spokesman (Matt. xv. 12, 15), had remonstrated with their Master for proclaiming a bold, broad principle of spiritual morality against the traditions of the Schools: "Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended when they heard that saying?" Now He proclaims another principle, equally bold and far-reaching, and as certain to offend. He reminds the disciple of his former fear, sees that some such feeling is already rising up in his mind, and recognises that within certain limits it is legitimate. To have refused to pay the *didrachma* on purely personal grounds would have been to claim prematurely that title of the Christ, the "Son of God," which He had told His disciples at this crisis not to claim for Him (xvi. 20). To have done so on general grounds, common to Himself and others, would have been to utter a truth for which men were not prepared, and which they were certain to pervert. Those who had not learnt the higher law of the free gift of love would be tempted to make their freedom an excuse for giving nothing. Devout and generous minds would be shocked at what would seem to them to cut off the chief support of the outward glory of the House of God. The spirit in which our Lord spoke and acted was one with that which was the guide of St. Paul's life: "It is good" to surrender even the freedom which we might well claim, if by it "thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak" (Rom. xiv. 21).

**A piece of money.**—The Greek gives the name of the coin, the *stater*. It was reckoned as equal to four *drachmæ*, and would therefore pay the *didrachma* both for Peter and his Master. Incidentally, we may note the light which this throws on the poverty of our Lord and His disciples. They had returned from their wanderings in the north of Palestine, occupying some three or four weeks, and they were now absolutely penniless, not so much as a *stater* between them. The money was to be given for both, and so far, as has been said, our Lord includes Peter in the list of those who, as "children of the kingdom," might have claimed exemption. No payment is made for the other disciples: most probably they had homes of their own, where the *didrachma* would be applied for, and were not living with Peter.

We cannot ignore the many points of contrast which difference this narrative from that of our Lord's miracles in general. (1.) There is no actual record that a miracle was wrought at all. We expect the narrative to end with the words, "and he went and found as it had been said unto him," but we do not find them. The story is told for the sake of the teaching, not of the wonder. Men have inferred that a miracle must have been wrought from a literal interpretation of the promise. (2.) On this assumption the wonder stands alone by itself in its nature and surroundings. It does not originate in our Lord's compassion, nor depend upon faith in the receiver, as in the miracles of healing, nor set forth a spiritual truth, like that of the withered fig-tree. It is so far distinct and peculiar. This would not in itself, perhaps, be of much, if any, weight against a direct statement of a fact, but it may be allowed to be of some significance in the exceptional and therefore conspicuous absence of such a statement. On these grounds some have been led to explain our Lord's words as meaning, in figurative language which the disciple would understand, that Peter was to catch the fish, and sell it for a *stater*. Most interpreters, however, have been content to take our Lord's words in their literal sense, and to believe that they were literally fulfilled. If we accept this view the narrative has its parallel in the well-known story of the ring of Polycrates, the tyrant of Samos (Herod. iii. 39—41).

## XVIII.

(1) **Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?**—St. Mark records more fully that they had disputed about this in the way, that our Lord, knowing their thoughts (Luke ix. 47), asked them what had been the subject of their debate, and that they were then silent. We may well believe that the promise made to Peter, and the special choice of the Three for closer converse, as in the recent Transfiguration, had given occasion for the rival claims which thus asserted themselves. Those who were less distinguished looked on this preference, it may be, with jealousy, while, within the narrower circle, the ambition of the two sons of

ing, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? (2) And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, (3) and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children,[a] ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. (4) Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. (5) And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. (6) But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me,[b] it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

(7) Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by

[a] ch. 19. 14; 1 Cor. 14. 20.

[b] Mark 9. 42; Luke 17. 1, 2.

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Zebedee to sit on their Lord's right hand and on His left in His kingdom (Matt. xx. 23), was ill-disposed to concede the primacy of Peter.

(2) **Jesus called a little child unto him.**—As the conversation was "in the house" (Mark ix. 33), and that house probably was Peter's, the child may have been one of his. As in other like incidents (Matt. xix. 13; xxi. 15, 16), we may recognise in our Lord's act a recognition of the special beauty of childhood, a tender love for the gracious trust and freedom from rivalry which it shows when, as yet, the taint of egotism is undeveloped. St. Mark adds that He folded His arms round the child as in loving fondness, and, before He did so, uttered the warning words, "If any one will (wishes to) be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all." A late tradition of the Eastern Church identified the child with Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, taking the name which he gave himself as passive, Θεοφόρος (Theophoros), "one who had been carried or borne by God." Ignatius himself, however, uses it in its active sense, "one who carries God within him."

(3) **Except ye be converted.**—The English word expresses the force of the Greek, but the "conversion" spoken of was not used in the definite, half-technical sense of later religious experiences. What was needed was that they should "turn" from their self-seeking ambition, and regain, in this respect, the relative blamelessness of children.

**Ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.**—The force of the words as spoken to the Twelve can hardly be exaggerated. They were disputing about precedence in the kingdom, and in that very dispute they were showing that they were not truly in it. It was essentially spiritual, and its first condition was abnegation of self. Even the chief of the Apostles was self-excluded when he gloried in his primacy. The words at least help us to understand the more mysterious language of John iii. 3, 5, as to the "new birth" of water and the Spirit, which one, at least, of the disputants must, in all likelihood, have heard.

(4) **Whosoever therefore shall humble himself.**—This, then, was the answer to the question "Who shall be the greatest." The secret of true greatness lay in that unconsciousness of being great, which takes the lowest position as that which of right belongs to it. For a man to "humble himself" with the purpose of attaining greatness would frustrate itself, and reduce humility to an hypocrisy. The "pride that apes humility," the false lowliness of Col. ii. 18, is even more hateful and contemptible than open self-assertion.

**As this little child.**—That which was to be the result of a deliberate act in the disciples was found in the child's nature as it was. They were to make themselves lowly as he was lowly. The transition from the plural to the singular gives an almost dramatic vividness to the form of our Lord's teaching. We seem to see the child shrinking timidly, with blushing face and downcast eyes, from the notice thus drawn to him.

(5) **Whoso shall receive one such little child.**—The words are memorable as the first utterance of the truth afterwards proclaimed as the law of final judgment in chap. xxv. 40, and as giving to that law the widest possible range of universality. No child of man is excluded from those whom Christ calls His brethren.

(6) **Whoso shall offend.**—The words seem to indicate the thoughts which rise unbidden in the minds of men in proportion as they are Christ-like in character. We gaze on the innocent beauty of childhood with love and admiration. What if that beauty should be marred by the taint of evil? What if those who do the Tempter's work should cause the "little one" to stumble and to fall?

**That a millstone were hanged about his neck.**—The word for "millstone" indicates the larger stone-mill, in working which an ass was commonly employed, as distinguished from the smaller handmill of Luke xvii. 35. The punishment was not recognised in the Jewish law, but it was in occasional use among the Greeks (Diod. Sic. xvi. 35), and had been inflicted by Augustus (Sueton. *Aug.* lxvii.) in cases of special infamy. Jerome states (in a note on this passage) that it was practised in Galilee, and it is not improbable that the Romans had inflicted it upon some of the ringleaders of the insurrection headed by Judas of Galilee. Our Lord's words, on this assumption, would come home with a special vividness to the minds of those who heard them. The infamy of offending one of the "little ones" was as great as that of those whose crimes brought upon them this exceptional punishment. It was obviously a form of death less cruel in itself than many others, and its chief horror, both for Jews and heathen, was, probably, that it deprived the dead of all rites of burial. St. Mark and St. Luke, it may be noted, insert here the complaint of St. John, that he had seen one casting out devils in the name of Jesus, and this must be taken into account as an element in the sequence of thought. He was unconsciously placing himself among those who were hindering the work of Christ, and so "offending" those who believed in him. (See Note on Mark ix. 38.)

(7) **Woe unto the world.**—The interjection is one of sorrow as well as denunciation, and here the former meaning is predominant, as the latter is in the next clause of the verse. The true meaning of "offence," as meaning not the mere transgression of a law, but such a transgression as causes the fall of others, must be carefully borne in mind throughout. The words, "It must needs be that offences come, but woe unto that man . . . ," unite in strange contrast the two truths which all the history of human guilt brings before us. Crimes seem to recur with something like the inevitable regularity of a law, and yet in each single instance the will of the offender has been free

whom the offence cometh. (8) Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee:[a] it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. (9) And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire. (10) Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. (11) For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.[b] (12) How think ye?[c] if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? (13) And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. (14) Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

(15) Moreover if thy brother shall tres-

[a] ch. 5. 30; Mark 9. 45.
[b] Luke 19. 10.
[c] Luke 15. 4.

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to choose, and he is therefore rightly held responsible both by divine and human laws.

(8, 9) **If thy hand or thy foot offend thee.**—(See Notes on chap. v. 29, 30.) The disciples had heard the words before in the Sermon on the Mount, but their verbal reproduction, sharpened as by a special personal application addressed not to the multitude but to the Twelve, gave them a new and solemn emphasis.

(10) **Take heed that ye despise not.**—The words remind us of what we are apt to forget in the wider range of the preceding verses. The child was still there, perhaps still folded in the arms of Jesus, still the object of His care, even while He spake of the wider offences that "must needs come" upon the world at large. Looking to the frequency with which our Lord's words were addressed to the thoughts of His hearers, it seems likely that the faces of some at least of the disciples betrayed, as they looked on the child, some touch of half-contemptuous wonder, that called for this prompt rebuke. The words have, however, as interpreted by what follows, a wider range, and include among the "little ones," the child-like as well as children—all, indeed, whom Christ came to save.

**In heaven their angels.**—The words distinctly recognise the belief in guardian angels, entrusted each with a definite and special work. That guardianship is asserted in general terms in Ps. xxxiv. 7, xci. 11, Heb. i. 14, and elsewhere. What is added to the general fact here is, that those who have the guardianship of the little ones assigned to them are among the most noble of the heavenly host, and are as the angels of the Presence, who, like Gabriel, stand before the face of God, and rejoice in the beatific vision (Luke i. 19). The words "I say unto you" clothe what follows with the character of a new truth, as they do the like utterances of Luke xv. 7, 10. Whatever difficulties may connect themselves with the whole range of questions connected with the ministry of angels, they lie outside the work of the interpreter. There can be no question that our Lord adopts as His own the belief in the reality of that ministry, and this at a time when the Sadducees, as a leading sect, were calling it in question (Acts xxiii. 8). The words are indirectly important as a witness to the fact that the Lord Jesus, while He proclaimed the universal Fatherhood of God as it had never been proclaimed before, also (almost, as it were, unconsciously, and when the assertion of the claim was not in view) claims a sonship nearer and higher than could have been claimed by any child of man.

(11) **For the Son of man is come.**—The words are wanting in many of the best MSS. Assuming their genuineness, two points call for special notice. (1.) The work of the Son of Man in saving that which was lost is given as the ground of the assertion of the special glory of the angels of the little ones. They are, in their ministry, sharers in His work, and that work is the highest expression of the will of the Eternal Father. To one at least of the disciples the words that he now heard must have recalled words that had been addressed to him in the most solemn crisis of his life, when he had been told that he should one day "see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man" (John i. 51). In that ascent and descent they were not only doing homage to His glory, but helping Him in His work. (2.) The words seem chosen to exclude the thought that there was any special grace or saintliness in the child round whom our Lord had folded His arms. To Him the child's claim was simply his need and his capacity for all that is implied in salvation. The words which He spake were as true of any "wastrel" child of the streets as of the offspring of the holiest parents.

(12) **If a man have an hundred sheep.**—The parable is repeated more fully in Luke xv. 4—6, and will best find its full explanation there. The fact that it reappears there is significant as to the prominence, in our Lord's thoughts and teaching, of the whole cycle of imagery on which it rests. Here the opening words, "How think ye?" sharpen its personal application to the disciples, as an appeal to their own experience. Even in this shorter form the parable involves the claim on our Lord's part to be the true Shepherd, and suggests the thought that the "ninety and nine" are (1) strictly, the unfallen creatures of God's spiritual universe; and (2) relatively, those among men who are comparatively free from gross offences.

(13) **Rejoiceth more of that sheep.**—More literally, *over it.*

(14) **Even so it is not the will . . .**—The form of the proposition has all the force that belongs to the rhetorical use of the negative. "It is not the will" suggests the thought that the will of the Father is the very opposite of that, and so the words are identical in their teaching with those of St. Paul, "He will have all men to be saved" (1 Tim. ii. 4). The continued presence of the child is again emphasised in "one of these little ones."

(15) **Moreover if thy brother shall trespass.**—Better, *and if thy brother shall sin.* A twofold train of thought is traceable in what follows. (1.) The presence of "offences" implies sin, and the question

pass against thee,[a] go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. (16) But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses[b] every word may be established. (17) And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee

[a] Lev. 19. 17; Luke 17. 3.
[b] Deut. 19. 15; John 8. 17; 2 Cor. 13. 1; Heb. 10. 28.

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arises how each man is to deal with those sins which affect himself personally. (2.) The dispute in which the teaching recorded in this chapter had originated implied that the unity of the society which was then represented by the Twelve, had for the time been broken. Each of the disciples thought himself, in some sense, aggrieved by others. Sharp words, it may be, had been spoken among them, and the breach had to be healed.

**Go and tell him his fault.**—The Greek is somewhat stronger, *convict him of his fault*, press it home on him in such a way as to reach his reason and his conscience. (Comp. John xvi. 8.) But this is to be done "between thee and him alone." Angry words spoken in the presence of others would fail of that result. It is significant that the substance of the precept is taken from the passage in Leviticus (xix. 17, 18) which ends with "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

**Thou hast gained thy brother.**—The words in part derive their force from the subtle use of a word in one sense which men associated commonly with another. "Gain" of some kind, aimed at, or wrongfully withheld, was commonly the origin of disputes and litigation. A man hoped to reap some profit by going to law. In the more excellent way which our Lord points out, he would by sacrificing the lower gain, attain the higher, and win for God (see 1 Cor. ix. 19, 1 Pet. iii. 1, for this aspect of the word) and for himself the brother with whom he had been at variance.

(16) **Take with thee one or two more.**—The principle of action is the same as before. The first point aimed at is the reformation of the offender without the scandal (here we may take the word both in its earlier and later senses) of publicity. If personal expostulation failed, then the "one or two" were to be called in. (Comp. 1 Cor. vi. 5.) It is, of course, implied that they are not partisans, but disinterested representatives of what is likely to be the common estimate of the fault committed. If the end is attained through them, well; if not, then they are in reserve for the final stage as witnesses that every effort has been made in the spirit of a righteous friendship. As the previous verse implied a reference to Lev. xix. 17, so does this to Deut. xix. 15. This selection of all that was highest and most spiritual in the ethical teaching of the Law is one of the features of our Lord's method, for the most part insufficiently recognised. (See John viii. 17.)

(17) **If he shall neglect to hear them.**—Better, *refuse*, the word implying something more than mere negligence.

**Tell it unto the church.**—Here, and here only in our Lord's teaching after the promise to Peter (chap. xvi. 18), we have the word *Ecclesia* repeated. The passage takes its place among the most conspicuous instances of the power of a word. Theories of church authority, as exercised by the priesthood, or bishops, or councils, or the personal infallibility of the Bishop of Rome, have been built upon it. The last clause has been made the groundwork of the system of church discipline which loads the heretic with anathemas, excommunicates the evil-doer, places nations under an interdict. It can scarcely be doubted that the current thoughts and language of Englishmen as to ecclesiastical discipline would have been very different, if instead of "tell it unto the church," "if he neglect to hear the church," we had had the word "congregation." And yet this, or some such word (say "assembly" or "society"), is confessedly the true meaning of the Greek, and was the rendering of all the English versions, from Tyndale onwards, till the Rhemish translators introduced "church," and were followed by the Authorised version.

So understood, the words point to the final measures for the reformation of the offender, and the vindication of the divine law of righteousness. When the two forms of private remonstrance have failed, the case is to be brought before the society at large. The appeal is to be made not to the rulers of the congregation, but to the congregation itself, and the public opinion of the *Ecclesia* is to be brought to bear upon the offender. Should he defy that opinion and persist in his evil-doing, he practically excommunicates himself. All societies are justified in excluding from their communion one who repudiates the very conditions of membership; and his being regarded as "a heathen and a publican" is but the legitimate consequence of his own act. Even here, however, we can hardly think of our Lord as holding up the Pharisees' way of acting towards "the heathen and the publican" as a pattern for imitation. They were to be made to feel that they were no longer within the inner circle of brotherhood, but they were still men, and, as such, entitled to courtesy and all kindly offices. St. Paul's teaching as to the treatment of the incestuous adulterer in 1 Cor. v. 1—5, 2 Cor. ii. 6, 7, and of fornicators generally in 1 Cor. vi. 1—7, may be referred to as a practical illustration of the meaning of our Lord's words.

It is obvious that the rule, as such, presupposes a small society, in the midst of a greater outside world, able to deal thus minutely with the offences of individual members. With the extension of the society, so that the church and the world became conterminous and hardly distinguishable, it was natural, perhaps, that it should follow the course of other human societies, and transfer its jurisdiction from the "congregation," or "assembly," to individual judges as its representatives. And so it was that, in the long-run, the bishops took the place of the congregation, and exercised its functions. So long as they were really in harmony with the mind of the church at large, this might work well enough, but there was the risk of their "lording it over God's heritage" (1 Pet. v. 3); and, in any case, there was the loss of that activity of the reason and conscience of the society which the original form of polity implied, and of which St. Paul's appeal to its judgment as against the inconsistency of the chief of the Apostles, is a very striking instance (Gal. ii. 11). How far that can be revived is one of the hard questions of our own time and, perhaps, of all times. The end may have to be attained by very different means. We cannot inform the Universal or the National Church of the misdeeds of each individual member. Practically, to submit them formally to the judgments even of the smaller society of the town or village to which the offender belonged, would not be workable. Possibly, the soluas an heathen[a] man and a publican. (18) Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven:[b] and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (19) Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. (20) For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

(21) Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?[c] (22) Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

(23) Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. (24) And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.[1] (25) But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord com-

[a] 1 Cor. 5. 9; 2 Thess. 3. 14.

[b] John 20. 23; 1 Cor. 5. 4.

[c] Luke 17. 4.

[1] *A talent is 750 ounces of silver, which after five shillings the ounce is* £187 10s.

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tion of the problem may be found in remembering that in a Christian nation the Church and the State, as far as morality is concerned, tend, in spite of doctrinal divisions, to be, as was said, conterminous, and hence that we are fulfilling the spirit of our Lord's commands when, after all private remonstrances have failed to check the evil, we appeal to the public opinion of Christians in the neighbourhood, larger and smaller, which is affected by it. How this is to be done will vary with the varying circumstances of each individual case, but it is no idle paradox to say that as society is now constituted, the most effective way of "telling the church" may sometimes be to appeal to that public opinion as represented by lawful courts, or otherwise impartially expressed.

(18) **Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth.**—(See Note on xvi. 19.) The promise before made to Peter is now extended not only to the other Apostles, but to the whole society of which they were the representatives, and is, of course, to be understood as dependent on the same implied, though not expressed, condition. So far as the *Ecclesia* was true to its Lord, and guided by His Spirit, it was not to think that its decisions depended on any temporal power. They were clothed, as truth and righteousness are ever clothed, with a divine authority. As connected with the treatment of individual offenders, the words "bind" and "loose" may seem here to approximate more closely than in chap. xvi. 19, to "condemning" and "absolving" in their force, but there is no ground for setting aside, even here, their received meaning in the language of the scribes. The Christian had to apply general laws to particular instances. The trial of each offender became a ruling case. It was binding or loosing, directly as interpreting the Law, only secondarily and indirectly as punishing or pardoning.

(19) **Shall agree on earth.**—The promise, as before, is dependent on implied conditions. Those who pray must be gathered together in the name of Christ (verse 20), *i.e.*, as trusting to His intercession, asking a prayer which is not the utterance of the natural but the spiritual man, asking it in entire submission to the will of their Father in heaven. In the absence of those conditions, as in the prayer of the sons of Zebedee, asking they knew not what (xx. 20), that which they desired might be withheld from them, or granted in quite another manner than that on which they had set their hearts.

(20) **Where two or three . . .**—The true meaning of the words is well embodied in the well-known patristic axiom, *Ubi tres, ibi Ecclesia* ("Where three are there is a church"). The strength of the Christian society was not to be measured by a numerical standard, but by its fulfilment of the true conditions of its life. The presence of Christ was as true and mighty, His communion with His Church as real, when His followers were but as a remnant, as when they were gathered in the great congregation. He would be with the "two or three" (there is, perhaps, a special reference to the self-same words in verse 16), to plead for them as the great High Priest, to impart Himself to them, to ratify their decisions.

(21) **How oft shall my brother sin . . ?**—The words of verse 15 had obviously told on the minds of the disciples, and had roused them to question with themselves. But they could not, all at once, take in the truth that the "commandment" was "exceeding broad." Surely, they thought, there must be some limit to this way of dealing with the brother who has sinned against us? And the sacred number suggested itself as the natural limit. Not, it may be conjectured, without a half-conscious reference to the words of the prophet (Amos i. 3), that "for three transgressions and for four" the punishment thereof should not be turned away, the Apostle made answer to his own question, "Until seven times?" as though the line must be drawn there.

(22) **Seventy times seven.**—The use of the symbolic numbers that indicated completeness was obviously designed to lead the mind of the questioner altogether away from any specially numerical standard as such. As there was no such limit to the forgiveness of God, so there should be none to that of man. The very question as to the latter showed the inquirer had not rightly apprehended the nature and extent of the former.

(23) **Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened . . .**—Over and above the direct teaching of the parable it has the interest, as regards its form, of being, in some sense, an advance on those of chapter xiii., *i.e.*, as more fully bringing out human interests, and so more after the pattern of those that are characteristic of St. Luke.

(24) **Ten thousand talents.**—It is hardly necessary to discuss in detail the value in modern coinage of the sum thus described. Assuming the Greek "talent" to have been rightly used by the LXX. translators for the Hebrew *kikar* in Exod. xxxviii. 25, 26, we have a basis of calculation which makes the talent equal to 3,000 shekels; and taking the shekel as equal to four *drachmæ*, this makes the 10,000 talents about £2,500,000 sterling. The sum is evidently named in its vague vastness to indicate the immensity of the debt which man owes to God, the absolute impossibility of his ever clearing off the aggregate, ever-accumulating, of sins of omission and commission which are brought home to his conscience when God "takes account" with him.

(25) **His lord commanded him to be sold.**—The framework of the parable was necessarily drawn

manded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. (26) The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him,[1] saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. (27) Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. (28) But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence:[2] and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. (29) And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. (30) And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. (31) So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. (32) Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou

[1] Or, *besought him.*

[2] *The Roman penny is the eighth part of an ounce, which after five shillings the ounce is sevenpence halfpenny.*

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from human laws, and, except as indicating the sentence of condemnation passed upon the sinner himself, there is no occasion of pressing the details as we unfold the spiritual meaning that lies below the imagery.

(26) **Fell down, and worshipped him.**—The word implies simply the prostrate homage of a servant crouching before his master.

**I will pay thee all.**—The promise was, under such circumstances, an idle boast, but it describes with singular aptness the first natural impulse of one who is roused to a sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. He will try to balance the account as by a series of instalments; he will score righteous acts in the future as a set-off against the transgressions of the past. In theological language, he seeks to be "justified by works."

(27) **Was moved with compassion.**—The teaching of the parable deals tenderly even with that impotent effort at justification. It touches the heart of the "lord of that servant," and is met with more than it asked for—not with patience and long-suffering only, but with the pity that forgives freely. The sinner is absolved, and the vast debt which he could never pay is forgiven freely. So far as he believes his Lord's assurance, he is now "justified by faith."

**Forgave him the debt.**—The Greek noun in this case expresses a debt contracted through a loan, and in the interpretation of the parable suggests a thought like that in the parables of the Pounds, the Talents, and the Unjust Steward. What we call our own—life, with all its opportunities—is really lent to us, and God requires repayment with interest.

(28) **Which owed him an hundred pence.**—Here the calculation is simpler than in verse 24. The "hundred pence" are a hundred Roman *denarii* (the *denarius* being equal to sevenpence-halfpenny), a hundred days' wages of the labourer and soldier, enough to provide a meal for 2,500 men (John vi. 7). There is a considerable truthfulness in the choice of such a sum, which has, perhaps, been too little noticed. Had our Lord been seeking simply a rhetorical antithesis between the infinitely great and the infinitely little, it would have been easy to select some small coin, like the *denarius*, the *as*, or the *quadrans*, as the amount of the fellow-servant's debt. But to the fishermen of Galilee the "hundred pence" would appear a really considerable sum, and when they came to interpret the parable they would thus be led to feel that it recognised that the offences which men commit against their brothers may, in themselves, be many and grievous enough. It is only when compared with their sins against God that they sink into absolute insignificance.

**He laid hands on him.**—We are shocked, and are meant to be shocked, by the brutal outrage with which the creditor enforces his claim, but it doubtless was but too faithful a picture of what the disciples had often witnessed, or, it may be, even practised. We are tempted to ask whether this really represents any phenomena of the spiritual life. Can a man who has really been justified and pardoned become thus merciless? The experience of every age, almost of every household, shows that the inconsistency is but too fatally common. The man is not consciously a hypocrite, but he is as yet "double-minded" (Jas. i. 8), and the baser self is not conquered. In the language of the later teaching of the New Testament the man's faith is not one which "worketh by love" (Gal. v. 6). He is justified, but not as yet sanctified.

(29) **Have patience with me.**—No one can fail to note the dramatic force of the utterance of the self-same words as had been used before by the debtor, who now appears as creditor. And in this case the promise was not a vain pretence. A few weeks or months of labour would have enabled the debtor to pay what he thus owed. Man can atone for his offences as against man, though not as against God.

(30) **Till he should pay the debt.**—Neither the memory of his lord's mercy, nor any touch of pity, restrains the man who broods over the memory of wrong. But the course which he takes is, it may be noted, as unwise as it is ungenerous. He, as a slave, cannot command his fellow-slave to be sold. He can cast him into prison; but in so doing he cuts the debtor off from all opportunities of gaining the money by which he might pay his debt. His vindictiveness is so far suicidal. This surely is not without its analogue in the interpretation of the parable. Whatever be the nature of the offence, patience and forbearance at once encourage and enable the offender to make restitution. Harshness shuts him up as in the prison of a sullen defiance.

(31) **They were very sorry.**—The fellow-servants are, of course, in the inner meaning of the parable, those who are members of the same spiritual society. Our Lord appeals as by anticipation to the judgment which Christians in general, perhaps even to that which mankind at large, would pass upon such conduct. It is suggestive that He describes them, not as being angry or indignant (though such feelings would have been natural enough), but as "exceeding sorry." Sorrow, rather than anger, is the mood of the true disciple of Christ as he witnesses the sins against love which are the scandals of the Christian society. Anger, the righteous wrath against evil, belongs rather, as in verse 32, to the Lord and Judge.

(32) **Desiredst me.**—Better, *entreatedst me.* In the story of the parable, the man had not specifically asked for this. His general prayer for forbearance had been answered above all that he could ask or think.

desiredst me: (33) shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? (34) And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. (35) So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

A.D. 33.

a Mark 10. 1.

CHAPTER XIX.—(1) And it came to pass, *that* when Jesus had finished these sayings,[a] he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judæa beyond Jordan; (2) and great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there.

(3) The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? (4) And he answered

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(33) **Even as I had pity on thee.**—The comparison of the two acts, the implied assumption that the pity of the one act would be after the pattern of the other, was, we may believe, designed to lead the disciples to the true meaning of the prayer they had been taught to use, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

(34) **Delivered him to the tormentors.**—The words seem deliberately vague. We dare not say that the "tormentors" are avenging angels, or demons, though in the hell of mediæval poetry and art these latter are almost exclusively represented as the instruments of punishment. More truly, we may see in them the symbols of whatever agencies God employs in the work of righteous retribution, the stings of remorse, the scourge of conscience, the scorn and reproach of men, not excluding, of course, whatever elements of suffering lie behind the veil, in the life beyond the grave.

**Till he should pay all that was due unto him.**—As in chap. v. 26 (where see Note), the words suggest at once the possibility of a limit, and the difficulty, if not impossibility, of ever reaching it. How could the man in the hands of the tormentors obtain the means of paying the ten thousand talents? And the parable excludes the thought of the debt being, as it were, taken out in torments, a quantitative punishment being accepted as the discharge of what could not otherwise be paid. The imagery of the parable leaves us in silent awe, and we only find refuge from our questionings in the thought that "the things that are impossible with man are possible with God" (xix. 26).

(35) **My heavenly Father.**—The adjective is slightly different in form from that commonly used, suggesting rather the thought of the "Father in heaven."

**Do also unto you.**—The words cut through the meshes of many theological systems by which men have deceived themselves. Men have trusted in the self-assurance of justification, in the absolving words of the priest, as though they were final and irreversible. The parable teaches that the debt may come back. If faith does not work by love, it ceases to justify. If the man bind himself once again to his old evil nature, the absolution is annulled. The characters of the discharge are traced (to use another similitude) as in sympathetic ink, and appear or disappear according to the greater or less glow of the faith and love of the pardoned debtor.

**From your hearts.**—A verbal, formal forgiveness does not satisfy the demands of the divine righteousness. God does not so forgive, neither should man.

**Every one his brother their trespasses.**—The two last words are not in some of the best MSS., and have probably been added to make the verse correspond with vi. 14, 15.

## XIX.

(1) **He departed from Galilee.**—The verse covers a considerable interval of time which the materials supplied by St. Luke and St. John enable us to fill up. From the former we get the outlines of what has been called, as being "beyond Jordan," our Lord's Peræan ministry, from Luke ix. 51 to xviii. 30; from the latter, according to the arrangement of the best harmonists, His visit to Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles (John vii. 2), and again at that of the Dedication (John x. 22). To keep these facts in mind will throw some light on the narrative that follows here. The journey from Galilee to Peræa appears from Luke xvii. 11 to have led our Lord through Samaria.

(3) **Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?**—See Note on v. 32. So far as the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount had become known, it gave a sufficiently clear answer to the inquiry of the Pharisees. It is, however, quite conceivable that it had not reached the ears of those who now put the question, or, that if it had, they wished to test His consistency, and to see whether on this point He still held with the stricter rule of Shammai, and not with the laxer rule of Hillel. If the narrative of the woman taken in adultery in John viii. 1—11 be rightly placed (see Note on that passage), that might have given rise to doubts and rumours. Would He who dealt so pitifully with the adulteress have sanctioned divorce even in that case, or pronounced the marriage bond absolutely indissoluble? Or was His apparent tolerance of that offender indicative of a lower standard as to the obligations of marriage? In any case, they might hope to bring Him into conflict either with the stricter or the more popular school of casuists. An illustration of what has been stated in v. 32 may be found in the fact that the Jewish historian Josephus records how he had divorced two wives on grounds comparatively trivial (*Life*, c. 75, 76), and speaks incidentally in his history of "many causes of all kinds" as justifying separation (*Ant.* iv. 8, § 23). We do not know on what grounds Herod Antipas had divorced the daughter of Aretas, but it is probable enough that here, as afterwards, the Herodian party were working with the Pharisees. Here, in Peræa, they might count, either on the Teacher shrinking from expressing His convictions, or so uttering them as to provoke the tetrarch's wrath, as the Baptist had done. In either case, a point would have been gained against Him.

(4) **Have ye not read . . . ?**—The answer to the question is found not in the words of a code of laws, but in the original facts of creation. That represented the idea of man and woman as created for a permanent relationship to each other, not as left to unite and separate as appetite or caprice might prompt.

and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female,[a] (5) and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife:[b] and they twain shall be one flesh?[c] (6) Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. (7) They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement,[d] and to put her away? (8) He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. (9) And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.[e]

(10) His disciples say unto him, If the

[d] Deut. 24. 1.

[a] Gen. 1. 27.

[b] Gen. 2. 24; Eph. 5. 31.

[c] 1 Cor. 6. 16.

[e] ch. 5. 32; Mark 10. 11; Luke 16. 18; 1 Cor. 7. 11.

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(5) **And said, For this cause.**—In Gen. ii. 24 the words appear as spoken by Adam; but words so uttered, prompted by the Holy Spirit, and stamped with the divine sanction, might well be looked on as an oracle from God, the expression of a law of His appointment.

(6) **What therefore God hath joined.**—Strictly interpreted, the words go further than those of v. 32, and appear to forbid divorce under all circumstances. They are, however, rather the expression of the principle that should underlie laws, than the formulated law itself, and, as such, they assert the true ideal of marriage without making provision (such as was made before) for that which violates and annuls the ideal. It is remarkable that the essence of the marriage is made to depend, not on laws, or contracts, or religious ceremonies, but on the natural fact of union. Strictly speaking, that constitutes, or should constitute, marriage. The sin of all illicit intercourse, whether in adultery, or concubinage, or prostitution, is that it separates that union from the relations and duties which the divine order has attached to it, and makes it simply minister to the lusts of man's lower nature. The evil of every system that multiplies facilities for divorce is that it treats as temporary what was designed to be permanent, and reduces marriage, so far as it goes, to concubinage *durante bene placito*. This may, in some stages of social progress, as the next verses indicate, be the least of two evils; but it does not cease to be an evil, and the efforts of all teachers and legislators should be directed to raise the standard of duty rather than to acquiesce in its debasement.

(7) **They say unto him.**—The question comes apparently from the advocates of the laxer school. They fell back from what would seem to them a vague abstract principle upon the letter of the Law. Was Moses, the great lawgiver, sanctioning what God had forbidden? Would the Prophet of Nazareth commit Himself to anything so bold as that?

(8) **Moses because of the hardness of your hearts.**—The force of the answer lies (1) in emphasised substitution of "suffered" for "commanded." The scribes of the school of Hillel had almost turned divorce into a duty, even when there was no ground for it but incompatibility of temper or other lesser fault, as if Deut. xxiv. 1 had enjoined the writing of divorcement in such cases. (2) In the grounds assigned for the permission. Our Lord's position in the controversy between the two schools was analogous to that in which those who are true at once to principles and facts not seldom find themselves. He agreed, as we have seen, with the ideal of marriage maintained by the followers of Shammai. He accepted as a legitimate interpretation of the Law that of the followers of Hillel. But He proclaimed, with an authority greater than that of Moses, that his legislation on this point was a step backwards when compared with the primary law of nature, which had been "from the beginning," and only so far a step forward because the people had fallen into a yet lower state, in which the observance of the higher law was practically impossible. But for the possibility of divorce the wife would have been the victim of the husband's tyranny; and law, which has to deal with facts, was compelled to choose the least of two evils. Two important consequences, it will be obvious, flow from the reasoning thus enforced: (1) that the "hardness of heart" which made this concession necessary may be admitted as at least a partial explanation of whatever else in the Law of Moses strikes us as deviating from the standard of eternal righteousness embodied in the law of Christ—as, *e.g.*, the tolerance of polygamy and slavery, and the severity of punishment for seeming trivial faults; (2) that the principle is one of wider application than the particular instance, and that where a nation calling itself Christian has sunk so low as to exhibit the "hardness of heart" of Jews or heathens, there also a concessive legislation may be forced upon the State even while the churches assert their witness of the higher truth.

(9) **Whosoever shall put away his wife.**—The questions to which the law thus proclaimed gives rise have been discussed in the Note on v. 32. One serious difference has, however, to be noticed. Where in the earlier form of the precept we read, "causeth her (the woman put away for any cause but adultery) to commit adultery," we have here, more emphatically as bearing on the position of the husband in such a case, the statement that he by contracting another marriage "commits adultery." The utmost that the law of Christ allows in such a case is a divorce, *a mensâ et thoro*, not *a vinculo*. The legislation which permits the complete divorce on other grounds, such as cruelty or desertion on either side, is justified, so far as it is justifiable at all, on the ground of the "hardness of heart" which makes such a concession necessary. It is interesting to compare St. Paul's treatment of cases which the letter of this command did not cover, in 1 Cor. vii. 10—15.

(10) **If the case of the man.**—The words seem to indicate that the laxer view of the school of Hillel was the more popular one even with those who, like the disciples, had been roused to some efforts after a righteousness higher than that of the scribes or Pharisees. They looked forward to the possible discomforts of marriage under the conditions which their Master had set before them, and drew the conclusion that they outweighed its advantages. Why entangle themselves

case of the man be so with *his* wife, it is not good to marry. (11) But he said unto them, All *men* cannot receive this saying, save *they* to whom it is given. (12) For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from *their* mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive *it*, let him receive *it*.

(13) Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put *his* hands on them, and pray:[a] and the disciples rebuked them. (14) But Jesus

[a] Mark 10. 13; Luke 18. 15.

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in a union which they were no longer able to dissolve, when they got tired of it, by the short and easy method of a bill of divorcement? It is instructive to remember that one of the greatest of English writers has taken the same line of thought in dealing with the question. Milton's *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, and the treatises that followed it, are but an elaborate and eloquent expression of the words of the disciples, "If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry."

(11) **All men cannot receive this saying.**—As the words stand, "this saying" might refer either to the rule which our Lord had laid down on the subject of divorce, or to the comment of the disciples on that rule. What follows, however, determines the reference to the latter. Looking at marriage from a simply selfish point of view, and therefore with an entirely inadequate estimate of its duties on the one hand, and on the other of the temptations incident to the unmarried life when chosen on such grounds, they had come rashly to the conclusion that, if our Lord's rule held good, it was not good, not expedient, to "marry." He declares that judgment to be false. There were but few who were capable of acting safely on that conclusion. For those who were not so capable, and the next verse tells us who they were, marriage, with all its risks, was the truer, healthier, safer state. Alike in its brighter or sadder sides, in seeming success or seeming failure, it brought to men the discipline they needed.

(12) **There are some eunuchs.**—The words are singularly startling in their form, and bear upon them an unmistakable stamp of being a true report of teaching which, in its depth and originality, went beyond the grasp of those who heard and reported it. What they teach is, that only those who are in some sense "eunuchs," who are, *i.e.*, without the impulses that lead men to marriage, either naturally, or by the mutilation which then, as now, was common in the East, or who have conquered those impulses by the power of self-consecration to a higher life, can safely abstain from marriage. The celibacy of self-indulgence, or even of selfish prudence, tends but too fatally to impurity of heart or life. The man who thus makes himself as the eunuch, must do it "for the kingdom of heaven's sake," not, as too many have understood the words to mean, in order to win heaven for himself (that aim is not excluded, but it must not be the only or chief motive), but for the sake of all that the kingdom of heaven implies, in order to enlarge its range, and more effectually to bring the souls of men to receive it. Those who heard the words could hardly fail, as they thought over them, to look on their Master's life as having been the great perfect example of what He thus taught as to the higher form of holiness. The motives which St. Paul states as determining his own choice of the celibate life (1 Cor. vii. 7), or the counsel which he gave to others (1 Cor. vii. 32—34), are identical with this teaching in their principle. They have influenced men in all ages of the Church, leading them to sacrifice the life of home, with all its blessings, for their work as pastors or evangelists. The Church of Rome and the founders of monastic orders were not wrong in their ideal of the highest form of life. Their mistake lay in enforcing that ideal as a rule on those who had not the power to realise it. The boldness (as it seems to us) of our Lord's language seems intended to teach men that the work must be done as effectively as if, like Origen, they had obeyed the implied commandment in its letter. If the impulses still remain; if life is made miserable by the struggle with them; if they taint the soul by not being allowed to flow in their legitimate channel, the man is, *ipso facto*, disqualified for the loftier ideal. He has not made himself a eunuch for the kingdom of heaven's sake, and he is therefore among those who "cannot receive the saying" that it "is not good to marry." On such grounds the conduct of those who have married after pledging themselves, as priests of the Church of Rome, to vows of celibacy is amply justified. The vows were such as ought never to have been imposed, and men ought never to have taken, and therefore, like the tetrarch's oath (xiv. 7—9), when they were distinctly found to clash with the higher law of Nature, and to narrow what God had left free, their obligatory power ceased. The case of the monk who enters deliberately into an order of which celibacy is a condition, may seem at first to stand on a different footing; but here, also, though celibacy may legitimately be made a condition of continuing to belong to an order, the vow of a lifelong celibacy must be held to have been such as men had no right either to impose or take, and therefore as binding only so long as a man chooses to continue a member of the society which requires it.

(13) **Then were there brought unto him little children.**—St. Luke (xviii. 15) uses a word which implies infancy. The fact that they were brought (we may assume by their mothers) indicates that there was something in our Lord's look and manner that attracted children, and impressed their parents with the feeling that He loved them. That feeling, we may well believe, was deepened by His acts and words when He had taken in His arms the child whom He set before His disciples as a pattern of the true greatness of humility, and taught them that the angels of those little ones beheld the face of His Father (xviii. 10). The motives of the disciples in rebuking those that brought them, may, in like manner, be connected with what they had just heard from their Master's lips. What interest, they might have thought, could He have in these infants, when He had in those words appeared to claim for the "eunuch" life a special dignity and honour? What could the pressing claims of mothers and their children be to Him but a trouble and vexation, interfering with the higher life of meditation and of prayer?

(14) **Suffer little children, and forbid them**

said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. (15) And he laid *his* hands on them, and departed thence.

(16) And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?[a] (17) And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is* none good but one, *that is*, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the

[a] Mark 10. 17; Luke 18. 18.

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**not . . .**—St. Mark adds that Jesus "was much displeased," and represents Him as reproducing almost verbally the teaching of xviii. 3. The tenderness of His sympathy was kindled into indignation at the rough indifference of the disciples. As in thousands of those whose lives have been modelled after His pattern, the love of children was not weaker, but stronger, precisely because it depended on no human relationship, but sprang from His seeing in them the children of His Father.

**Of such is the kingdom of heaven.**—That is, the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these, is theirs as by inheritance.

(15) **He laid his hands on them.**—St. Mark records, as before, the act of caressing tenderness: "He folded them in His arms, and laid His hands upon them." The words and the act have rightly been regarded, as in the Baptismal Office of the Church of England, as the true warrant for infant baptism. More than doubtful passages in the Acts and Epistles; more than the authority, real or supposed, of primitive antiquity; more than the legal fiction that they fulfil the condition of baptism by their sponsors—they justify the Church of Christ at large in commending infants, as such, to the blessing of their Father. The blessing and the prayer of Christ cannot be regarded as a mere sympathising compliance with the fond wishes of the parents, and if infants were capable of spiritual blessings then, why, it may well be asked, should they be thought incapable now?

(16) **Behold, one came and said . . .**—The vagueness with which a man who must have been conspicuous is thus introduced, without a name, is every way significant. He was, like Nicodemus, "a ruler of the Jews" (Luke xviii. 18), *i.e.*, probably, a member of the Sanhedrin or great Council, like Joseph of Arimathæa. He was, beside this, conspicuously rich, and of high and ardent character. There is one other case in the first two Gospels which presents similar phenomena. In the narrative of the supper at Bethany, St. Matthew and St. Mark record the passionate affection which expressed itself in pouring the precious ointment of spikenard upon our Lord's head as the act of "a woman" (xxvi. 7; Mark xiv. 3), leaving her unnamed. In St. John xii. 3 we find that the woman was Mary, the sister of Lazarus. The train of thought thus suggested points to the supposition that here also there may have been reasons for suppressing in the records a name which was familiar to the narrator. What if the young ruler were Lazarus himself? The points of agreement are sufficiently numerous to warrant the conjecture. The household of Lazarus, as the spikenard ointment shows, were of the wealthier class. The friends who came to comfort the bereaved sisters, were themselves, in St. John's language, "of the Jews"—*i.e.*, of the chief rulers (John xi. 19). The young ruler was obviously a Pharisee, and the language of Martha (John xi. 24) shows that she too believed in eternal life and the resurrection of the dead. The answer to the young ruler, as "One thing thou lackest" (as given by St. Mark and St. Luke), is almost identical with that to Martha, "One thing is needful" (Luke x. 42). In such a case, of course, nothing can be attained beyond conjectural inference, but the present writer must avow his belief that the coincidences in this case are such as to carry the evidence to a very high point of probability. It is obvious that the hypothesis, if true, adds immensely to the interest both of the narrative now before us, and to that of the death and resurrection of Lazarus in John xi.

**Good Master.**—The better MSS. omit the adjective, and it has probably been added here by later copyists to bring the passage into a verbal agreement with the narrative of St. Mark and St. Luke. From the prominence given to it in the form of our Lord's answer, as reported by them, we may reasonably believe that it was actually uttered by the questioner. The words show reverence and, at least, half-belief. They are such as might well come from the brother of one who had sat at Jesus' feet, drinking in His words (Luke x. 39)—from one who, like Nicodemus, looked on Him as a Rabbi, "a Teacher" sent from God.

**That I may have eternal life.**—In St. Mark (x. 17) and St. Luke (xviii. 18), and in some of the oldest MSS. of St. Matthew, "that I may *inherit* eternal life." The question exhibits the highest and noblest phase of Pharisaism. The seeker has a firm belief in something that he knows as "eternal life." He thirsts for it eagerly. He believes that it is to be won, as a perpetual inheritance, by some one good deed of exceptional and heroic goodness. The Teacher has left on him the impression of a goodness such as he had seldom, if ever, seen before, and as being therefore able to guide him to the Supreme Good.

(17) **Why callest thou me good?**—Here again the older MSS. give a different form to our Lord's answer: "Why askest thou Me concerning that which is good? There is One that is the Good." The alteration was probably made, as before, for the sake of agreement with the other Gospels. In either case the answer has the same force. The questioner had lightly applied the word "good" to One whom he as yet regarded only as a human teacher, to an act which, it seemed to him, was in his own power to perform. What he needed, therefore, was to be taught to deepen and widen his thoughts of goodness until they rose to Him in whom alone it was absolute and infinite, through fellowship with whom only could any teacher rightly be called good, and from whom alone could come the power to do any good thing. The method by which our Lord leads him to that conclusion may, without irreverence, be permitted to call up the thought of the method in which Socrates is related to have dealt with like questioners, both in the grave, sad irony of the process, and in the self-knowledge in which it was designed to issue.

**Keep the commandments.**—The questioner is answered as from his own point of view. If eternal life was to be won by doing, there was no need to come to a new Teacher for a new precept. It was enough to keep the commandments, the great moral laws of God, commandments. (18) He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder,[a] Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, (19) Honour thy father and *thy* mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (20) The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? (21) Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go *and* sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come *and* follow me. (22) But when

[a] Ex. 20. 13.

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as distinct from ordinances and traditions (xv. 3), with which every Israelite was familiar.

(18) **He saith unto him, Which?**—Literally, *of what kind?* The questioner has been trained in the language of the schools, has heard debates as to which was the great commandment of the Law (xxii. 36). Which class of commandments is he to keep that he may win eternal life?

**Thou shalt do no murder.**—Our Lord's answer was clearly determined by the method of which we have ventured to speak as calling up the thought of that of Socrates. To a questioner of another type of character He would have pointed (as in xxii. 37) to the two great commandments, the love of God, and the love of man, on which hung all the Law and the Prophets. Here it was more in harmony with His loving purpose to leave out of sight altogether the commandments of the first table, that tell men of their duty towards God, and to direct attention only to those which, as speaking of our duty to our neighbour, were thought common and familiar things. The change in the order of the commandments, so that the Fifth follows those which in the Decalogue it precedes, seems to imply a design to lead the seeker through the negative to the positive forms of law, through definite prohibitions of single acts to the commandments which were "exceeding broad," as fulfilled only in the undefined region of the affections.

(20) **All these things have I kept.**—There is obviously a tone of impatient surprise in the questioner's reply. He had come seeking some great thing to satisfy his lofty aspirations after eternal life. He finds himself re-taught the lessons of childhood, sent back, as it were, to a lower form in the school of holiness. He had not learnt that to keep any one of those commandments in its completeness is the task of a life, that to keep one perfectly implies keeping all. In marked contrast with this half-contemptuous treatment of the simpler elements of religion we may recall our Lord's use, in the Temptation, of the three passages connected, directly or indirectly, with those which were written on the phylacteries that men wore, and which would naturally be taught to children as their first lesson in the Law. (See Notes on iv. 1—11.)

**What lack I yet?**—Ignorant as the young ruler was of his own spiritual state, his condition was not that of the self-satisfied Pharisee. The question implied a dissatisfaction with himself, a sense of incompleteness, as hungering and thirsting after a higher righteousness. And this accounts for the way in which our Lord dealt with him.

(21) **Jesus said unto him . .**—St. Mark (x. 21) adds the striking words, "Jesus beholding him" (better, perhaps, *gazing on him*), "loved him." There was something in the young seeker after holiness which drew to him, in a measure altogether exceptional, the affection of the Great Teacher. The same word is used in regard to him which is used in relation to the "disciple whom Jesus loved," and (here the coincidence takes its place in the chain of evidence for the view above suggested) to Lazarus, and Martha, and Mary (John xi. 5). There was the fervour, the longing after a higher life, the personal trust, which made him a not unworthy object of the love of Jesus, and therefore He would not spare the discipline which the questioner needed, the test which, being such as he was, was required for the completeness of his life.

**If thou wilt be perfect.**—Better, *if thou wishest.* St. Mark and St. Luke report the words, "One thing thou lackest," reminding us forcibly of the "One thing is needful" of Luke x. 42. (See Note on verse 16.)

**Go and sell that thou hast.**—It would be altogether a mistake to see in this either an obligation binding on all seekers after eternal life, or even what has been called a "counsel of perfection," a precept laying down an indispensable condition for all who aim at its higher forms and powers. It was strictly a remedy for the special evil which hindered the young ruler's progress to perfection, applicable to others so far only as their cases are analogous. It would be idle to deny that there have been and are many such analogous types of character, and so far as any one is conscious of being under the power of wealth and its temptations, so far there is a call to some act asserting his victory over those temptations, in the spirit, if not in the letter, of the command thus given. But it is, we must remember, the spirit, and not the letter, which is binding. Distribution to the poor was then almost the only form of charity. A wider range of action is presented by the organisation of modern Christian societies, and the same sacrifice may be made in ways more productive of true and permanent good; in the foundation, *e.g.*, of schools or hospitals, in the erection of churches, in the maintenance of home or foreign missions.

**Treasure in heaven.**—The parallelism with the Sermon on the Mount should not be forgotten (v. 20). The "treasure" is the "eternal life" which the young ruler was seeking, the memory of good deeds, the character formed and perfected, the vision of the presence of God.

**Come and follow me.**—Here again St. Mark adds words that are pregnant with meaning, "Take up thy cross, and follow Me." The seeker could not then understand all their significance. To the Teacher that cross was now coming, day by day, nearer, and He saw that each true disciple must be prepared to follow Him in that path of suffering, which was also the path of glory. "*Via crucis, via lucis.*"

(22) **He went away sorrowful.**—St. Mark adds "sad," *i.e., frowning*, or as with a look that lowered. The word is the same as that used of the sky in xvi. 3. The discipline so far did its work. It made the man conscious of his weakness. He shrank from the one test which would really have led him to the heights of holiness at which he aimed. Yet the sorrow, though it was a sign of the weakness of one whose heart was not yet whole with God, was not without an element of hope.

the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

(23) Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. (24) And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. (25) When his disciples heard *it*, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? (26) But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

(27) Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken

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A mere worldling would have smiled with cynical contempt, as the Pharisees did when they heard words of a like tendency (Luke xvi. 14). Here there was at least a conflict. On the common view, that we can know nothing more of the questioner, it might seem as if the failure was final. On that which has been suggested here, we may believe that the Lord, who "loved" the seeker after eternal life in spite of this inward weakness, did not leave him to himself. The sickness, the death, the resurrection of Lazarus, may have been the discipline which proved that the things that are impossible with men are possible with God. We are at least not hindered by any chronological difficulty from placing those events after the dialogue with the young ruler.

(23) **Shall hardly enter.**—The Greek adverb is somewhat stronger than the colloquial meaning of the English. Literally, *shall not easily enter.* The words imply not so much the mere difficulty as the painfulness of the process. Here, as elsewhere, the "kingdom of heaven" is not the state of happiness after death, but the spiritual life and the society of those in whom it is realised even upon earth. Into that kingdom those only can enter who become as little children, as in other things, so in their unconsciousness of the cares of wealth.

(24) **It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.**—Two explanations have been given of the apparent hyperbole of the words. (1.) It has been conjectured that the Evangelists wrote not κάμηλος (a camel), but κάμιλος (a cable). Not a single MS., however, gives that reading, and the latter word, which is not found in any classical Greek author, is supposed by the best scholars (*e.g.*, Liddell and Scott) to have been invented for the sake of explaining this passage. (2.) The fact that in some modern Syrian cities the narrow gate for foot-passengers, at the side of the larger gate, by which waggons, camels, and other beasts of burden enter the city, is known as the "needle's eye," has been assumed to have come down from a remote antiquity, and our Lord's words are explained as alluding to it. The fact—to which attention was first called in Lord Nugent's *Lands, Classical and Sacred*—is certainly interesting, and could the earlier use of the term in this sense be proved, would give a certain vividness to our Lord's imagery. It is not, however, necessary. The Talmud gives the parallel phrase of an *elephant* passing through a needle's eye. The Koran reproduces the very words of the Gospel. There is no reason to think that the comparison, even if it was not already proverbial, would present the slightest difficulty to the minds of the disciples. Like all such comparisons, it states a general fact, the hindrance which wealth presents to the higher growths of holiness, in the boldest possible form, in order to emphasise its force, and leaves out of sight the limits and modifications with which it has to be received, and which in this instance (according to the text on which the English version is based) were supplied immediately by our Lord Himself (Mark x. 24).

(25) **Who then can be saved?**—There is an almost child-like *naïveté* in the question thus asked by the disciples. They, whether among their own people or among strangers, had found the desire of wealth to be the universal passion. Even they themselves, when they had forsaken their earthly goods, had done so (as Peter's question showed but too plainly, verse 27) as with a far-sighted calculation. They were counting on outward riches in that kingdom as well as outward glory. And now they heard what seemed to them a sweeping condemnation, excluding all who possessed, and, by implication, all who sought after, riches from the kingdom. The feeling which thus showed itself in the disciples has, curiously enough, affected the text of the narrative in St. Mark. What seems an explanatory and softened statement, "How hardly shall they that trust in riches enter into the kingdom of God!" (Mark x. 24), is not found in the best MSS. The omission may have been an accidental error of the copyists, but it is scarcely probable; and its absence from St. Matthew and St. Luke, not less than that it is not our Lord's usual method to soften or explain His teaching, leads to the conclusion that a marginal note, added by some one who felt as the disciples felt, has here found its way into the text.

(26) **Jesus beheld them.**—We can surely conceive something of the expression of that look. He had gazed thus on the young ruler, and read his inner weakness. Now, in like manner, he reads that of the disciples; and the look, we may believe, tells of wonder, sorrow, tenderness, anxiety. Those feelings utter themselves in the words that follow, partly in direct teaching, partly in symbolic promises, partly in a parable.

**With men this is impossible.**—General as the words are in their form, we cannot help feeling that they must have seemed to the disciples to have rebuked their hasty judgment, not only as to the conditions of salvation generally, but as to the individual case before them. He, the Teacher, would still hope, as against hope, for one in whom He had seen so much to love and to admire. Their wider teaching is, of course, that wealth, though bringing with it many temptations, may be so used, through God's grace, as to be a help, not a hindrance, in that deliverance from evil which is implied in the word "salvation."

(27) **Behold, we have forsaken.**—The question betrayed the thoughts that had been working in the minds of the disciples, and of which, as was his wont, St. Peter made himself the spokesman. They had complied with their Master's commands. What were they to have as the special reward to which they were thus entitled? It is obvious that in asking for that reward they showed that they had complied with the letter only, not with the spirit, of the command. They had not in the true sense of the word, denied themselves,

all, and followed thee;[a] what shall we have therefore? (28) And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.[b] (29) And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. (30) But many *that are*

[a] Mark 10. 28; Luke 18. 28.

[b] Luke 22. 30.

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though they had forsaken the earthly calling and the comforts of their home; and they were dwelling on what they had done, as in itself giving them a right to compensation.

(28) **In the regeneration.**—In the only other passage in the New Testament in which the word occurs, it is applied to baptism (Tit. iii. 5), as the instrument of the regeneration or new birth of the individual believer. Here, however, it clearly has a wider range. There is to be a "new birth" for mankind as well as for the individual. The sorrows through which the world was to pass were to be as the travail-pangs of that passage into a higher life. (See Note on xxiv. 8.) Beyond them there lay, in the thoughts of the disciples, and, though after another pattern, in the mind of Christ, the times of the "restitution of all things" (Acts iii. 21), the coming of the victorious Christ in the glory of His kingdom. In that triumph the Twelve were to be sharers. Interpreted as they in their then stage of progress would necessarily interpret them, the words suggested the idea of a kingdom restored to Israel, in which they should be assessors of the divine King, not only or chiefly in the great work of judging every man according to his works, but as "judging," in the old sense of the word, the "twelve tribes of Israel," redressing wrongs, guiding, governing. As the words that the Son of Man should "sit on the throne of His glory" recalled the vision of Dan. vii. 14, so these assured them that they should be foremost among those of "the saints of the Most High," to whom, as in the same vision, had been given glory and dominion (Dan. vii. 27). The apocalyptic imagery in which the promise was clothed reappears in the vision of the four-and-twenty elders seated on their thrones in Rev. iv. 4, in the sealing of the hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of Israel in Rev. vii. 4, and the interpretation of the words here is subject to the same conditions as that of those later visions. What approximations to a literal fulfilment there may be in the far-off future lies behind the veil. They receive at least an adequate fulfilment if we see in them the promise that, in the last triumphant stage of the redeeming work, the Apostles should still be recognised and had in honour, as guiding the faith and conduct of their countrymen; their names should be on the twelve foundations of the heavenly Jerusalem (Rev. xxi. 14); they should be sharers in the throne and glory of its King. The thought on which St. Paul dwells, that the "saints shall judge the world" (1 Cor. vi. 2), in like manner refers not only or chiefly to any share which the disciples of Christ shall have in the actual work of the final judgment, but to the assured triumph of the faith, the laws, the principles of action of which they were then the persecuted witnesses. We must not ignore the fact that, in at least one instance, the words, absolute as they were in their form, failed of their fulfilment. The guilt of Judas left one of the thrones vacant. The promise was given subject to the implied conditions of faithfulness and endurance lasting even to the end.

(29) **Every one that hath forsaken.**—While the loyalty and faith of the Apostles were rewarded with a promise which satisfied their hopes then, and would bring with it, as they entered more deeply into its meaning, an ever-increasing satisfaction, their claim to a special privilege and reward was at least indirectly rebuked. Not for them only, but for all who had done or should hereafter do as they did, should there be a manifold reward, even within the limits of their earthly life, culminating hereafter in the full fruition of the "eternal life" of which they had heard so recently in the question of the young ruler.

**For my name's sake.**—The variations in the other Gospels, "for my sake and the gospel's" (Mark x. 29), "for the kingdom of God's sake" (Luke xviii. 29), are significant, (1) as explanatory, (2) as showing that the substantial meaning of all three is the same. The act of forsaking home and wealth must not originate in a far-sighted calculation of reward; it must proceed from devotion to a Person and a cause, must tend to the furtherance of the gospel and the establishment of the divine Kingdom.

**Shall receive an hundredfold.**—The better MSS. have "manifold more," as in St. Luke. The received reading agrees with St. Mark. Here it is manifestly impossible to take the words literally, and this may well make us hesitate in expecting a literal fulfilment of the promise that precedes. We cannot look for the hundredfold of houses, or wives, or children. What is meant is, that the spirit of insight and self-sacrifice for the sake of God's kingdom multiplies and intensifies even the common joys of life. Relationships multiply on the ground of spiritual sympathies. New homes are opened to us. We find new friends. The common things of life—sky, and sea, and earth—are clothed with a new beauty to the cleansed eyes of those who have conquered self. St. Mark (x. 30) adds words which, if one may so speak, are so strange that they must have been actually spoken,—"with persecutions." We seem to hear the words spoken as a parenthesis, and in a tone of tender sadness, not, perhaps, altogether unmingled with a touch of the method which teaches new truths, by first meeting men's expectations, and then suddenly presenting that which is at variance with them. The thoughts of the disciples were travelling on to that "hundredfold," as though it meant that all things should be smooth and prosperous with them. They are reminded that persecution in some shape, the trials that test and strengthen, is inseparable from the higher life of the kingdom. (Comp. Acts xiv. 22.) Men need that discipline in order that they may feel that the new things are better than the old.

(30) **Many that are first shall be last.**—The words point obviously not only to the general fact of the ultimate reversal of human judgments, but to the individual case of which the disciples had made themselves the judges. They had seen one who stood high in his own estimate brought low by the test of the divine Teacher. They were flattering themselves that they, who had left all, and so could stand that test, were among the first in the hierarchy of the king-

first shall be last; and the last *shall be* first.[a]

CHAPTER XX.—(1) For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. (2) And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny[1] a day, he sent them into his vineyard. (3) And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, (4) and said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. (5) Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. (6) And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? (7) They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, *that* shall ye receive. (8) So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them *their*

A. D. 33.

[a] ch. 20. 16; Mark 10. 31; Luke 13. 30.

[1] *The Roman penny is the eighth part of an ounce, which after five shillings the ounce is sevenpence halfpenny.*

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dom. For them too, unless their spirit should become other than it was in its self-seeking and its self-complacence, there might be an unexpected change of position, and the first might become the last. The parable that follows was designed to bring that truth more vividly before them.

XX.

(1) **For the kingdom.**—The division of the chapter is here singularly unfortunate, as separating the parable both from the events which gave occasion to it and from the teaching which it illustrates. It is not too much to say that we can scarcely understand it at all unless we connect it with the history of the young ruler who had great possessions, and the claims which the disciples had made for themselves when they contrasted their readiness with his reluctance.

**To hire labourers into his vineyard.**—The framework of the parable brings before us a form of labour in some respects lower than that of the "servants," or "slaves," who formed part of the household, and had been bought or born to their position. The labourers here are the "hired servants" of Luke xv. 17, engaged for a time only, and paid by the day. Interpreting the parable, we may see in the householder our Lord Himself. It was indeed a title which He seems to have, as it were, delighted in, and which He applies directly to Himself in chaps. x. 25, xiii. 27, 52. And the "vineyard" is primarily, as in Isa. v. 1, the house of Israel, which the Anointed of the Lord had come to claim as His kingdom. The "early morning" answered accordingly to the beginning of our Lord's ministry; the "labourers" He then called were the disciples whom, at the outset of His ministry, He had summoned to follow Him. He had promised them a reward. Though at the best they were unprofitable servants, He yet offered them wages, and the wages were the kingdom of heaven itself (chap. v. 3, 10); in other words, "righteousness, and peace, and joy;" in other words, yet again, "eternal life, seeing and knowing God" (chap. v. 8; John xvii. 3). We may trace, I believe, something of a subtle and peculiar fitness in our Lord's choice of this form of labour, as distinct, on the one side, from free and willing service, and, on the other, from the task-work of slaves. It was not in itself the best or most adequate symbol of the relation of the disciples to their Lord, but as their question, "What shall we have, therefore?" implies, it was that on which their minds were dwelling, and therefore He chose it, adapting Himself so far to their weakness, that He might teach them the lesson which they needed.

(2) **A penny a day.**—Measured by its weight, the "penny"—*i.e.*, the Roman *denarius*, then the common standard of value in Palestine—was, as nearly as possible, sevenpence-halfpenny of our coinage. Its real equivalent, however, is to be found in its purchasing power, and, as the average price of the unskilled labour of the tiller of the soil, it may fairly be reckoned as equal to about half-a-crown of our present currency. It was, that is, in itself, an adequate and just payment.

(3) **About the third hour.**—Reckoning the day after the Jewish mode, as beginning at 6 A.M., this would bring us to 8 A.M. The "market-place" of a town was the natural place in which the seekers for casual labour were to be found waiting for employment. In the meaning which underlies the parable we may see a reference to those who, like St. Matthew (ix. 9) and the disciples called in chap. viii. 19—22, were summoned after the sons of Jonas and of Zebedee.

(4) **Whatsoever is right.**—The absence of a definite contract in hiring the labourers who did less than the day's work obviously involved an implicit trust in the equity of the householder. They did not stipulate for wages, or ask, as the disciples had asked, "What shall we have therefore?" The implied lesson thus suggested is, that a little work done, when God calls us, in the spirit of trust, is better than much done in the spirit of a hireling.

(6) **About the eleventh hour.**—The working day, which did not commonly extend beyond twelve hours (John xi. 9), was all but over, and yet there was still work to be done in the vineyard, all the more urgent because of the lateness of the hour. The labourers who had been first hired were not enough. Is there not an implied suggestion that they were not labouring as zealously as they might have done? They were working on their contract for the day's wages. Those who were called last of all had the joy of feeling that their day was not lost; and that joy and their faith in the justice of their employer gave a fresh energy to their toil.

(7) **Because no man hath hired us.**—This, again, is one of the salient points of the parable. The last-called labourers had not rejected any previous summons, and when called they obeyed with alacrity. They, too, came in full unquestioning faith.

(8) **When even was come.**—It was one of the humane rules of the Mosaic law that the day-labourer was to be paid by the day, and not made to wait for his wages (Deut. xxiv. 15). This law the householder keeps, and his doing so is a feature in his character.

**Beginning from the last unto the first.**—The order is not without its significance. It was a hire, beginning from the last unto the first. (9) And when they came that *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. (10) But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. (11) And when they had received *it*, they murmured against the goodman of the house, (12) saying, These last have wrought *but* one hour,[1] and thou has made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. (13) But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? (14) Take *that* thine *is*, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. (15) Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? (16) So the last shall be

[1] Or, *have continued one hour only.*

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practical illustration of the words which had introduced the parable, that the last should be the first.

(9) **Every man a penny.**—The scale of payment rested on the law of a generous equity. The idleness of the labourers had been no fault of theirs, and the readiness with which they came at the eleventh hour implied that they would have come as readily had they been called at daybreak, and therefore they received a full day's wages for their fraction of a day's work. The standard of payment was qualitative, not quantitative. In the interpretation of the parable, the "penny," as before, represents the eternal life of the kingdom of heaven. No true labourer could receive less; the longest life of labour could claim no more.

(10) **But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more.**—Up to this time we may think of the disciples as having listened with an eager interest, yet only half-perceiving, if at all, the drift of the parable, looking, it may be, for some payment to the first-called labourers proportionate to the duration of their service. Now, unless they were altogether blind, they must have seen their own thoughts reflected in the parable. They too, as their question showed, had been expecting to receive more. Eternal life was not enough for them, without some special prerogative and precedence over others. The fact that the first labourers *were* paid their wages gives a touch of gentleness to what would otherwise have seemed the severity of the parable. The presence of a self-righteous, self-seeking spirit mars the full blessedness of content; but if the work has been done, it does not deprive men altogether of their reward. The labourers who murmured are, in this respect, in the same position as the elder son in the parable of the Prodigal, who was told, in answer to his complaints, that all that his father had was his (Luke xv. 31).

(11) **They murmured**—*i.e.*, as the Greek tense shows, with repeated and prolonged murmurs.

**The goodman of the house.**—Better, *householder*. The Greek word is the same as in verse 1, and the archaic English phrase is a needless variation.

(12) **But one hour.**—Literally, in what was probably the technical language of labourers, *made but one hour.*

**The burden and heat of the day.**—The word rendered "heat" is elsewhere used—as in Jas. i. 11, and the LXX. of Jonah iv. 8—for the "burning wind" that often follows on the sunrise, and makes the labour of the first half of the day harder than that of the latter.

(13) **Friend.**—The word so translated (literally, *comrade, companion*) always carries with it in our Lord's lips a tone of reproof. It is addressed to the man who had not on a wedding garment (chap. xxii. 12), and to the traitor Judas (chap. xxvi. 50).

**I do thee no wrong.**—The answer of the householder is that of one who is just where claims are urged on the ground of justice, generous where he sees that generosity is right. Had the first-called labourers shared this generosity, they would not have grudged the others the wages that they themselves received, and would have found their own reward in sympathy with their joy. This would be true even in the outer framework of the parable. It is *à fortiori* true when we pass to its spiritual interpretation. No disciple who had entered into his Master's spirit would grudge the repentant thief his rest in Paradise (Luke xxiii. 43). No consistent Christian thinks that he ought to have some special reward because he sees a death-bed repentance crowned by a peace, the foretaste of eternal life, as full and assured as his own.

(14) **Take that thine is, and go thy way.**—The tone of dismissal is natural and intelligible in the parable. The question, What answers to it in God's dealings with men? is not so easy to answer. If the "penny" which each received was the gift of eternal life, did those who answered to the murmuring labourers receive that, or were they excluded by their discontent from all share in it? Was the money which they received as "fairy-gold" that turned to a withered leaf in the hands of its thankless possessor? The answer is, perhaps, to be found in the thought that that reward lies in the presence of God to the soul of the disciple, and that this depends for its blessedness on the harmony between the character of the believer and the mind of God. Heaven is not a place, but a state, its happiness is not sensual but spiritual, and those who are in it share its blessedness in proportion as they are like God and see Him as He is. It is only perfect when their charity is like His.

(15) **Is it not lawful . . . ?**—The question is not that of one who asserts an arbitrary right; it appeals tacitly to a standard which none could question. As far as the labourer was concerned, the householder had a right to give freely of what was his own. He was responsible to God only. In the interpretation of the parable, God was Himself the Householder, and men ought to have sufficient faith in Him to accept the gifts to some which wrought no wrong to others as in harmony with absolute righteousness.

**Is thine eye evil?**—The "evil eye" was, as in Prov. xxviii. 22, that which looked with envy and ill-will at the prosperity of others. In Mark vii. 22, it appears among the "evil things" that come from the heart. Popularly, as the derivation of the word "envy" (from *invidere*) shows, such a glance was thought to carry with it a kind of magic power to injure, and was to be averted, in the superstitious belief which still lingers in the East and many parts of Europe, by charms and amulets.

(16) **So the last shall be first.**—This, then, is the great lesson of the parable, and it answers at once the

first, and the first last:[a] for many be called, but few chosen.

(17) And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way,[b] and said unto them, (18) Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, (19) and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify *him*:[c] and the third day he shall rise again.

(20) Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons,[d] worshipping *him*, and desiring a certain

[a] ch. 19. 30.

[c] John 18. 32.

[b] Mark 10. 32; Luke 18. 31.

[d] Mark 10. 35.

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question whether we are to see in it the doctrine of an absolute equality in the blessedness of the life to come. There also there will be some first, some last, but the difference of degree will depend, not on the duration of service, nor even on the amount of work done, but on the temper and character of the worker. Looking to the incident which gave rise to the parable, we can scarcely help tracing a latent reference to the "young ruler" whom the disciples had hastily condemned, but in whom the Lord, who "loved" him (Mark x. 21), saw the possibility of a form of holiness higher than that which they were then displaying, if only he could overcome the temptation which kept him back when first called to work in his Master's vineyard in his Master's way. His judgment was even then reversing theirs.

**For many be called, but few chosen.**—The warning is repeated after the parable of the Wedding Feast (xxii. 14), and as it stands there in closer relation with the context, that will be the fitting place for dwelling on it. The better MSS., indeed, omit it here. If we accept it as the true reading, it adds something to the warning of the previous clause. The disciples had been summoned to work in the vineyard. The indulgence of the selfish, murmuring temper might hinder their "election" even to that work. Of one of the disciples, whose state may have been specially present to our Lord's mind, this was, we know, only too fatally true. Judas had been "called," but would not be among the "chosen" either for the higher work or for its ultimate reward.

Interpreting the parable as we have been led to interpret it, we cannot for a moment imagine that its drift was to teach the disciples that they would forfeit their place in the kingdom. A wider interpretation is, of course, possible, and has been often applied, in which the first-called labourers answer to the Jews, and those who came afterwards to converts in the successive stages of the conversion of the Gentiles. But this, though perhaps legitimate enough as an application of the parable, is clearly secondary and subordinate, and must not be allowed to obscure its primary intention.

(17) **And Jesus going up to Jerusalem.**—The narrative is not continuous, and in the interval between verses 16 and 17 we may probably place our Lord's "abode beyond Jordan" (John x. 40), the raising of Lazarus, and the short sojourn in the city called Ephraim (John xi. 54). This would seem to have been followed by a return to Peræa, and then the journey to Jerusalem begins. The account in St. Mark adds some significant facts. "Jesus went" (literally, *was going*—implying continuance) "before them." It was as though the burden of the work on which He was entering pressed heavily on His soul. The shadow of the cross had fallen on Him. He felt something of the conflict which reached its full intensity in Gethsemane, and therefore He needed solitude that He might prepare Himself for the sacrifice by communing with His Father; and instead of journeying with the disciples and holding "sweet converse" with them, went on silently in advance. This departure from His usual custom, and, it may be, the look and manner that accompanied it, impressed the disciples, as was natural, very painfully. "They were amazed, and as they followed, were afraid." It was apparently as explaining what had thus perplexed them that He took the Twelve apart from the others that followed (including probably the Seventy and the company of devout women of Luke viii. 2) and told them of the nearness of His passion.

(18) **Behold, we go up to Jerusalem.**—The words repeat in substance what had been previously stated after the Transfiguration (xvii. 22), but with greater definiteness. Jerusalem is to be the scene of His suffering, and their present journey is to end in it, and "the chief priests and scribes" are to be the chief actors in it, and "the Gentiles" are to be their instruments in it. The mocking, the spitting (Mark x. 34), the scourging, the crucifixion, all these are new elements in the prediction, as if what had before been presented in dim outline to the disciples was now brought vividly, in every stage of its progress, before His mind and theirs.

(19) **And the third day he shall rise again.**—This, as before, came as a sequel of the prediction that seemed so terrible. The Master looked beyond the suffering to the victory over death, but the disciples could not enter into the meaning of the words that spoke of it. St Luke, indeed (as if he had gathered from some of those who heard them what had been their state of feeling at the time), reports that "they understood none of these things, and this saying was hid from them, neither understood they the things that were spoken" (Luke xviii. 34). All was to them as a dark and dim dream, a cloud upon their Master's soul which time, they imagined, would disperse.

(20) **Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children.**—The state of feeling described in the previous Note supplies the only explanation of a request so strange. The mother of James and John (we find on comparing xxvii. 56 and Mark xv. 40, that her name was Salome) was among those who "thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear" (Luke xix. 11); and probably the words so recently spoken, which promised that the Twelve should sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (xix. 28) had fastened on her thoughts, as on those of her sons, to the exclusion of those which spoke of suffering and death. And so, little mindful of the teaching of the parable they had just heard, they too expected that they should receive more than others, and sought (not, it may be, without some jealousy of Peter) that they might be nearest to their Lord in that "regeneration" which seemed to them so near. The mother came to ask for her sons what they shrank from asking for themselves, and did so with the act of homage ("worshipping Him") which implied that she was speaking to a King.

thing of him. (21) And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. (22) But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. (23) And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father. (24) And when the ten heard *it*, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. (25) But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them,[a] and they that are great exercise authority upon them. (26) But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be

[a] Luke 22. 25.

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(21) **The one on thy right hand.**—The favour which had already been bestowed might, in some degree, seem to warrant the petition. John was known emphatically as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (John xiii. 23; xix. 26; xx. 2), and if we may infer a general practice from that of the Last Supper (John xiii. 23), he sat near Him at their customary meals. James was one of the chosen three who had been witnesses of the Transfiguration (xvii. 1). Both had been marked out for special honour by the new name of the Sons of Thunder (Mark iii. 17). The mother might well think that she was but asking for her sons a continuance of what they had hitherto enjoyed. The sternness of our Lord's words to Peter (Matt. xvi. 23) might almost justify the thought that his position had been forfeited.

(22) **Ye know not what ye ask.**—The words come to us as spoken in a tone of infinite tenderness and sadness. That nearness to Him in His glory could be obtained only by an equal nearness in suffering. Had they counted the cost of that nearness?

**To drink of the cup that I shall drink of.**—The words that follow, "to be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with," are not found in many of the best MSS., and have probably been added to bring St. Matthew's narrative into harmony with St. Mark's. For the sake of completeness, however, they will be examined here. And (1) we have the question, How did the two disciples understand our Lord's words? We are familiar with their meaning. Was it equally clear to them? As far as the cup is concerned, there can be little doubt that any reader of the Old Testament would at once recognise it as the symbol of a good or evil fortune. There was the "cup running over" of Ps. xxiii. 5, the "wine-cup of fury" of Jer. xxv. 15, the "cup of astonishment and desolation" of Ezek. xxiii. 33. The meaning of the "baptism" was, perhaps, less obvious (see Note on verse 29, on our Lord's use of the symbolism), yet here also there were the overwhelming "proud waters" of Ps. cxxiv. 5, the "waves and billows" of Ps. xlii. 7. The very verb, "to baptise" (*i.e.*, to plunge into the deep), was used by Josephus for the destruction of a city (*Wars*, iv. 3, § 3), by the LXX. for "terrifying" in Isa. xxi. 4. Our Lord Himself had already used it in dim mysterious reference to His coming passion (Luke xii. 50, where see Note). There was enough, then, to lead them to see in their Master's words an intimation of some great suffering about to fall on Him, and this is, indeed, implied in the very form of their answer. "We are able," they say, in the tone of those who have been challenged and accept the challenge. That their insight into the great mystery of the passion went but a little way as compared with their Master's, lies, of course, in the very nature of the case. When the beloved disciple, in after years, taught by his own experience and by his brother's death (Acts xii. 2), thought over the words, "Let this cup pass from Me" (xxvi. 39), he must have seen somewhat more clearly into its depth of meaning.

(23) **Is not mine to give.**—The words in italics are, of course, not in the Greek, and they spoil the true construction of the sentence. Our Lord does not say that it does not belong to Him to give what the disciples asked, but that He could only give it according to His Father's will and the laws which He had fixed. Considered as a prediction, there was a singular contrast in the forms of its fulfilment in the future of the two brothers. James was the first of the whole company of the Twelve to pass through the baptism of blood (Acts xii. 2). For John was reserved the weariness and loneliness of an old age surviving all the friendships and companionships of youth and manhood, the exile in Patmos, and the struggle with the great storm of persecution which raged throughout the empire under Nero and Domitian.

**To them for whom it is prepared of my Father.**—He does not say who these are; but the reappearance of the same words in chap. xxv. 34, throws some light on its meaning here. The kingdom is reserved for those who do Christ-like deeds of love; the highest places in the kingdom must be reserved for those whose love is like His own, alike in its intensity and its width.

(24) **Against the two brethren.**—Literally, *concerning*, or *about*. The context shows that it was not a righteous indignation, as against that which was unworthy of true followers of Jesus, but rather the jealousy of rivals, angry that the two brothers should have taken what seemed an unfair advantage of our Lord's known affection for them and for their mother.

(25) **Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles.**—No words of reproof could more strongly point the contrast between the true and the false views of the Messiah's kingdom. The popular Jewish expectations, shared by the disciples, were really heathen in their character, substituting might for right, and ambition for the true greatness of service.

**Exercise dominion over them.**—Better, as in 1 Pet. v. 3, *lord it over* them. It is not easy to find a like forcible rendering for the other word, but we must remember that it, too, implies a wrong exercise of authority, in the interest, not of the subjects, but of the rulers.

(26) **Whosoever will be great.**—Better, *whosoever wisheth to be great.* The man who was conscious,

great among you, let him be your minister; (27) and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: (28) even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto,[a] but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. (29) And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him.[b]

(30) And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* son of David. (31) And the multitude re-

[a] Phil. 2. 7.

[b] Mark 10. 46; Luke 18. 35.

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as the disciples were, of the promptings of ambition was at once to satisfy and purify them by finding his greatness in active service; not because that service leads to greatness of the type which natural ambition seeks for, but because it is in itself the truest and highest greatness.

(27) **Whosoever will be chief.**—Better, *first*, as continuing the thought of verse 16. The "servant" (better, *slave*) implies a lower and more menial service than that of the "minister" of the preceding verse, just as the "chief" or "first" involves a higher position than the "greatness" there spoken of. We introduce a false antithesis if we assign the "service" to this life, and the "greatness" as its reward to the life after death. The true teaching of the words is that the greatness *is* the service.

(28) **Not to be ministered unto.**—The words found a symbolic illustration when our Lord, a few days afterwards, washed the feet of the disciples who were still contending about their claims to greatness (John xiii. 3, 4); and the manner in which St. John connects the act with our Lord's manifested consciousness of His supreme greatness, seems to show that the words which we find here were then present to his thoughts. The Son of Man seemed to the beloved disciple never to have shown Himself so truly king-like and divine as when engaged in that menial act. But that act, we must remember, was only an illustration; and the words found their true meaning in His whole life, in His poverty and humiliation, in the obedience of childhood, in service rendered, naturally or supernaturally, to the bodies or the souls of others.

**To give his life a ransom for many.**—The word rightly rendered "ransom," is primarily "a price made for deliverance," and in this sense it is found in the Greek version of the Old Testament for "the ransom" which is accepted instead of a man's life in Ex. xxi. 30, for the "price of redemption" accepted as an equivalent for an unexpired term of service in Lev. xxv. 50, for riches as the "ransom of a man's life" in Prov. xiii. 8. No shade of doubt accordingly rests on the meaning of the word. Those who heard could attach no other meaning to it than that He who spake them was about to offer up His life that others might be delivered. Seldom, perhaps, has a truth of such profound import been spoken, as it were, so incidentally. It is as if the words had been drawn from Him by the contrast between the disputes of the disciples and the work which had occupied His own thoughts as He walked on in silent solitude in advance of them. It is the first distinct utterance, we may note, of the plan and method of His work. He had spoken before of "saving" the lost (xviii. 11): now He declares that the work of "salvation" was to be also one of "redemption." It could only be accomplished by the payment of a price, and that price was His own life. The language of the Epistles as to the "redemption that is in Christ Jesus," our being "bought with a price" (Rom. iii. 24; 1 Cor. vi. 20), "redeemed by His precious blood" (1 Pet. i. 19), the language of all Christendom in speaking of the Christ as our Redeemer, are the natural developments of that one pregnant word. The extent of the redemptive work, "for many," is here indefinite rather than universal, but "the ransom for all" of 1 Tim. ii. 6 shows in what sense it was received by those whom the Spirit of God was guiding into all truth. Even the preposition in, "for many" has a more distinct import than is given in the English version. It was, strictly speaking, a "ransom" *instead of, in the place of,* (ἀντὶ not ὑπὲρ) "many." Without stating a theory of the atonement, it implied that our Lord's death was, in some way, representative and vicarious; and the same thought is expressed by St. Paul's choice of the compound substantive ἀντίλυτρον, when, using a different preposition, he speaks of it as a ransom for (ὑπὲρ, *i.e., on behalf of*) all men (1 Tim. ii. 6).

(29) **As they departed from Jericho.**—Looking back to xix. 1, which speaks of our Lord having departed "beyond Jordan," we may believe that He crossed the river with His disciples at the ford near Jericho (Josh. ii. 7). On this assumption, the imagery of verse 22 may have been in part suggested by the locality. The river recalled the memory of His first baptism, by water; that led on to the thought of the more awful baptism of agony and blood.

(30) **Behold, two blind men sitting.**—Two difficulties present themselves on comparing this narrative with the accounts of the same or a similar event in St. Mark and St. Luke. (1.) The former agrees with St. Matthew as to time and place, but speaks of *one* blind man only, and gives his name as "Bartimæus, the son of Timæus." (2.) The latter speaks of one only, and fixes the time of the miracle at our Lord's entry into Jericho. The probable explanation of (1) is, that of the two men, the one whom St. Mark names was the more conspicuous and better known, and of (2), that St. Luke, visiting the scene and having the spot pointed out to him outside the gates of the city, was left to conjecture, or was misinformed, as to the work having been done when our Lord drew nigh unto it. The fact that St. Luke alone records the incident connected with Zacchæus (Luke xix. 1—10) indicates either that he had been on the spot as an inquirer, or had sought for local sources of information. The assumption that he recorded a different miracle from St. Matthew and St. Mark is possible, but hardly probable, and certainly needless, except on a very rigid and *à priori* theory of inspiration. It is possible, again, that St. Luke's local inquiries may have made his narrative more accurate than the recollection on which St. Matthew's and St. Mark's rested.

**O Lord, thou son of David.**—The blind men probably echoed the whispered murmurs of the crowd that was sweeping by, or, in any case, used (as did the woman of Canaan, xv. 22) the most popular and widely diffused of the names of the Messiah. They were beggars, and they appealed to the pity of the King.

(31) **The multitude rebuked them.**—The silence of our Lord, the hushed reverence of the multitude, led

buked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* son of David. (32) And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? (33) They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. (34) So Jesus had compassion *on them*, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

A.D. 33.

[a] Mark 11. 1: Luke 19. 29.

CHAPTER XXI.—(1) And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem,[a] and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, (2) saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose *them*, and bring *them* unto me. (3) And if any *man* say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will

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men to look on the eager, clamorous supplication as intrusive. The entry of the Prophet about to claim His kingdom was not to be thus disturbed. But they were not to be silenced, and the litanies of Christendom for centuries have been modelled on the *Kyrie Eleïson* ("Lord, have mercy upon us") which came from their lips.

(32) **Jesus stood still, and called them.**—Or, as in St. Mark, "bade them be called," the message being given specially to Bartimæus. St. Mark gives, with a graphic fulness, the very words of the message, "Be of good cheer, arise; He calleth thee," and adds that the blind man flung off his outer cloak, or mantle, and leapt up and came to Jesus. All three Gospels give our Lord's question in the same, or nearly the same, words. He sought, as with the clear insight of sympathy, to know what was the special grief that weighed upon the man's spirit.

(33) **Lord.**—St. Mark (x. 51, in the Greek), after his manner, gives the Hebrew word, Rabboni (comp. John xx. 16), which Bartimæus actually uttered.

(34) **So Jesus had compassion.**—Literally, *and Jesus.* It was not His purpose to meet the popular demand for signs and wonders, but compassion drew from Him the work of power which otherwise He would have shrunk from here. And then the two followed Him, glorifying God. In St. Luke's narrative the incident is followed by the story of Zacchæus and the parable of the Pounds. Possibly (see Note on verse 30) they preceded it.

## XXI.

(1) **And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem.**—Here again we have, as far as we can, to fill up a gap in St. Matthew's Gospel. We have to think of the journey up the narrow valley that leads from Jericho to Jerusalem. Our Lord, as before, was followed by the disciples, and they in their turn were followed by the crowds of pilgrims who were drawn to the Holy City either by the coming Passover or by wonder and curiosity to see what part the Prophet of Nazareth would take. Throughout the multitude, including the disciples, there was a feverish expectation that He would at last announce Himself as the Christ, and claim His kingdom (Luke xix. 11). They reach Bethany "six days before the Passover," probably, *i.e.*, on the Friday afternoon (John xii. 1). They remain there for the Sabbath, probably in the house of Lazarus or Simon the leper (Matt. xxvi. 6; John xii. 2; and in that of the latter we have the history of the anointing, which St. Matthew relates, out of its chronological order, in xxvi. 6—13). The point of time with which the narrative, which now becomes more continuous, opens, may be fixed at the dawn of the first day of the week, the daybreak of Palm Sunday.

**Bethphage.**—The village is named in Luke xix. 29, and in many MSS. of Mark xi. 1, in conjunction with Bethany, and before it, and from this it would seem probable that it lay on the road from Jericho, and was therefore to the east of Bethany. The traditional site, however, followed in most maps, makes it to the west of Bethany, and nearer the summit of the hill. The name signified "the house of unripe figs," as Bethany did "the house of dates," and Gethsemane "the oil-press," the three obviously indicating local features giving distinctness to the three sites. All three were on the Mount of Olives. Bethany is identified with the modern *El-'Azariyeh*, or *Lazarieh* (the name attaching to its connection with the history of Lazarus), which lies about a mile below the summit on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, in a woody hollow planted with olives, almonds, pomegranates, and figs. The palms implied in the name of Bethany and in the history of the entry into Jerusalem (John xii. 13) have disappeared.

**Two disciples.**—The messengers are not named in any of the Gospels. The fact that Peter and John were sent on a like errand in Luke xxii. 8 makes it, perhaps, probable that they were employed in this instance.

(2) **Go into the village over against you.**—This may have been either Bethany or, on the assumption that it was nearer Jerusalem, Bethphage itself.

**An ass tied, and a colt with her.**—St. Mark and St. Luke name the "colt" only. St. John speaks of a "young" or "small" ass, using the diminutive of the usual name (ὀνάριον). The colt was one on which "man had never sat" (Mark xi. 2; Luke xix. 30). The command clearly implies a deliberate fulfilment of the prophecy cited in verses 4 and 5. They were to claim the right to use the beasts as for the service of a King, not to hire or ask permission.

(3) **The Lord hath need of them.**—Simple as the words are, they admit of three very different interpretations. "The Lord" may be used either (1) in the highest sense as equivalent to Jehovah, as though the ass and the colt were claimed for His service; or (2) as referring to Christ in the special sense in which He was spoken of as "the Lord" by His disciples; or (3) as pointing to Him, but only in the language which all men would acknowledge, and without any special claim beyond that of being the Master whom the disciples owned as in a lower sense their Lord. Of these (3) is all but excluded by the facts of the case. The words involve a claim to more than common authority, and the claim is recognised at once. In favour of (2) we have the numerous instances in which the disciples and the evangelists not only address their Master as "Lord," but speak of Him as "the Lord" (xxviii. 6; Mark xvi. 19; Luke x. 1; xvii. 6; xviii. 6; John xi. 2; xiii. 13; xx. 2, 13, 18, 20, 25; xxi. 7, 12). For (1), lastly, we have our Lord's use of the word as a synonym for

send them. (4) All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, (5) Tell ye the daughter of Sion,[a] Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. (6) And the disciples went,[b] and did as Jesus commanded them, (7) and brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set *him* thereon. (8) And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed *them* in the way. (9) And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. (10) And when he was come into Jerusalem,[c] all

[a] Isa. 62. 11; Zech. 9. 9; John 12. 15.

[b] Mark 11. 4.

[c] Mark 11. 15; Luke 19. 45; John 2. 13.

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God (Mark v. 19; xiii. 20). On the whole (2) appears to commend itself as most in accordance with the customary language of the disciples. On the very probable assumption that the owners of the colt were, in some sense, themselves disciples, they would recognise the full import of the words thus addressed to them, and obey without hesitation.

(4) **All this was done.**—The Evangelist returns to the formula of i. 22. Literally, *all this has come to pass.* The words are his comment on the act. At the time (as we find from John xii. 16) the disciples did not understand its significance as connected with the prophecy that follows. The purpose lay in the mind of their Master, not in theirs. It is significant of what St. John records that neither St. Mark nor St. Luke alludes to the prophecy.

(5) **Tell ye the daughter of Sion.**—The words seem to have been cited from memory, the Hebrew text of Zech. ix. 9 beginning, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion; shout O daughter of Jerusalem," and inserting "just, and having salvation" in the description of the King. As the words stand in Zechariah (we need not here discuss the question as to the authorship or composition of that book) they paint the ideal King coming, not with "chariot" and "horse" and "battle bow," like the conquerors of earthly kingdoms, but as a prince of peace, reviving the lowlier pageantry of the days of the Judges (Judg. v. 10; x. 4; xii. 14), and yet exercising a wider dominion than David or Solomon had done, "from sea to sea, and from the river (Euphrates) to the ends of the earth" (Zech. ix. 10). That ideal our Lord claimed to fulfil. Thus interpreted, His act was in part an apparent concession to the fevered expectations of His disciples and the multitude; in part also a protest, the meaning of which they would afterwards understand, against the character of those expectations and the self-seeking spirit which mingled with them. Here, as before, we trace the grave, sad accommodation to thoughts other than His own to which the Teacher of new truths must often have recourse when He finds Himself misinterpreted by those who stand altogether on a lower level. They wished Him to claim the kingdom, that they might sit on His right hand and on His left. Well, He would do so, but it would be a kingdom "not of this world" (John xviii. 36), utterly unlike all that they were looking for.

**A colt the foal of an ass.**—Literally, *of a beast of burden,* the word not being the same as that previously used. In the Hebrew of Zechariah the word reproduces the old poetic phraseology of Gen. xlix. 11.

(6) **And the disciples went.**—St. Mark and St. Luke give more graphically an account of their finding the colt, of the question asked by the owner and the by-standers why they did it, and of their answering in the words they had been told to use, "The Lord hath need of them." They returned with the ass and the colt, and then the procession began.

(7) **They set him thereon**—*i.e.,* on the garments which served as a saddle. Our Lord rode on the colt, and the ass followed, or went along by His side. St. Mark and St. Luke mention the colt only.

(8) **And a very great multitude.**—Better, *the greater part of the multitude.* Part of the crowd had come with Him from Galilee, part streamed from Bethany, excited by the recent resurrection of Lazarus (John xii. 17). Some went before Him, some followed. As they advanced they were met by a fresh crowd pouring forth from Jerusalem. Of the latter, St. John records that they came out with palm-branches in their hands, as if to salute a king with the symbols of his triumph. (Comp. Rev. vii. 9.)

**Spread their garments in the way.**—This, again, was a recognised act of homage to a king. So Jehu, when the officers of the army of Israel chose him as their ruler, walked upon the garments which they spread beneath his feet (2 Kings ix. 13). So Agamemnon, tempted to an act of barbaric pomp, after the manner of Eastern kings, entered his palace at Mycenæ, walking upon costly carpets (Æschylus, *Agam.* 891).

(9) **Hosanna.**—We gather, by comparing the four Gospels, the full nature of the mingled cries that burst from the multitude. (1.) As here, "Hosanna." The word was a Hebrew imperative, "Save us, we beseech thee," and had come into liturgical use from Ps. cxviii. That Psalm belonged specially to the Feast of Tabernacles (see Perowne on Ps. cxviii.), and as such, was naturally associated with the palm-branches; the verses from it now chanted by the people are said to have been those with which the inhabitants of Jerusalem were wont to welcome the pilgrims who came up to keep the feast. The addition of "Hosanna to the Son of David" made it a direct recognition of the claims of Jesus to be the Christ; that of "Hosanna in the highest" (comp. Luke ii. 14) claimed heaven as in accord with earth in this recognition. (2.) "Blessed be" ("the King" in St. Luke) "He that cometh in the name of the Lord." These words, too, received a special personal application. The welcome was now given, not to the crowd of pilgrims, but to the King. (3.) As in St. Luke, one of the cries was an echo of the angels' hymn at the Nativity, "Peace on earth, and glory in the highest" (Luke ii. 14). (4.) As in St. Mark, "Blessed be the kingdom of our father David." We have to think of these shouts as filling the air as He rides slowly on in silence. He will not check them at the bidding of the Pharisees (Luke xix. 39), but His own spirit is filled with quite other thoughts than theirs. And those who watched Him saw the tears streaming down His cheeks as He looked on the walls and towers of the city, and heard, what the crowds manifestly did not hear, His lamentation over its coming fall (Luke xix. 41).

(10) **All the city was moved.**—It was the beginning of the Paschal week, and the city was therefore

the city was moved, saying, Who is this? (11) And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

(12) And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, (13) and said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of

filled with pilgrims of many lands. To them this was a strange prelude to the usual order of the feast, and they asked what it meant. The answer fell short of the full meaning of the shouts of the people, but it expressed that aspect of the character of Jesus which was most intelligible to strangers. He was "the Prophet of Nazareth of Galilee."

(12) **And Jesus went into the temple.**—Here, again, there is a gap to be filled up from another Gospel. St. Mark (xi. 11) says definitely that on the day of His solemn entry He went into the Temple, "looked round about on all things there,"—*i.e.*, on the scene of traffic and disorder described in this verse—and then, "the evening-tide being come" (or, "the hour being now late"), went back to Bethany, and did what is here narrated on the following day. So, with a like difference of order, St. Mark places the sentence on the barren fig-tree on the next morning, and before the cleansing of the Temple. (Comp. Note on verse 17.) St. John (ii. 13—25) records an act of like nature as occurring at the commencement of our Lord's ministry, on the first visit to Jerusalem after His baptism. Critics who have started with the assumption that the repetition of such an act was impossible, have inferred accordingly that the narrative has been misplaced either by the Three or by St. John, some holding with the latter and some with the former, on grounds more or less arbitrary. From the purest human historical point of view, we may, I believe, accept both narratives as true. If Jesus of Nazareth had been only a patriot Jew, filled with an intense enthusiasm for the holiness of the Temple, what more likely than that He should commence His work with a protest against its desecration? If the evils against which He thus protested, after being suppressed for a time, reappeared in all their enormity, what more probable than that He should renew the protest at this stage of His work, backed as He now was by the equal enthusiasm of the people? What more natural, again, than that the second cleansing should revive the memory of the first, and call up with it the words which are recorded by St. John, and not by the Three, and which served as the basis of the charge that He had threatened to destroy the Temple (John ii. 20, 21; Matt. xxvi. 61; Mark xiv. 58). There is—it cannot be concealed—a real difficulty in the omission of the earlier cleansing by the Three, and in the absence of any reference to the later cleansing by the Fourth; but the fact in either case is only one of many like facts incident to the structure of the Gospels. The Three knew nothing—or rather, they record nothing—as to our Lord's ministry in Jerusalem prior to this last entry. The Fourth, writing a Gospel supplementary either to the Three or to the current oral teaching which they embodied, systematically passes over, with one or two notable exceptions, what they had recorded, and confines his work to reporting, with marvellous vividness and fulness, specially selected incidents.

**Cast out them that sold and bought in the temple.**—The apparent strangeness of the permission of what seems to us so manifest a desecration, was obviously not felt by the Jews as we feel it. Pilgrims came from all parts of the world to keep the Passover, to offer their sacrifices, sin-offerings, or thank-offerings, according to the circumstances of each case. They did not bring the victims with them. What plan, it might seem, could be more convenient than that they should find a market where they could buy them as near as possible to the place where the sacrifice was to be offered? One of the courts of the Temple was therefore assigned for the purpose, and probably the priests found their profit in the arrangement by charging a fee or rent of some kind for the privilege of holding stalls. There is no trace of the practice prior to the Captivity, but the dispersion of the Jews afterwards naturally led men to feel the want of such accommodation more keenly. But this permission brought with it another as its inevitable sequel. The pilgrims brought with them the coinage of their own country—Syrian, Egyptian, Greek, as the case might be—and their money was either not current in Palestine, or, as being stamped with the symbols of heathen worship, could not be received into the Corban, or treasury of the Temple. For their convenience, therefore, money-changers were wanted, who, of course, made the usual *agio*, or profit, on each transaction. We must picture to ourselves, in addition to all the stir and bustle inseparable from such traffic, the wrangling and bitter words and reckless oaths which necessarily grew out of it with such a people as the Jews. The history of Christian churches has not been altogether without parallels that may help us to understand how such a desecration came to be permitted. Those who remember the state of the great cathedral of London, as painted in the literature of Elizabeth and James, when mules and horses laden with market produce, were led through St. Paul's as a matter of every-day occurrence, and bargains were struck there, and burglaries planned, and servants hired, and profligate assignations made and kept, will feel that even Christian and Protestant England has hardly the right to cast a stone at the priests and people of Jerusalem.

**And the seats of them that sold doves.**—The Greek has the article—"*the* doves," that were so familiar an object in the Temple courts. There is a characteristic feature in this incident as compared with the earlier cleansing. Then, as taking into account, apparently, the less glaringly offensive nature of the traffic, our Lord had simply bidden the dealers in doves to depart, with their stalls and bird-cages (John ii. 16). Now, as if indignant at their return to the desecrating work which He had then forbidden, He places them also in the same condemnation as the others.

(13) **It is written.**—The words which our Lord quotes are a free combination of two prophetic utterances: one from Isaiah's vision of the future glory of the Temple, as visited both by Jew and Gentile (Isa. lvi. 7); one from Jeremiah's condemnation of evils like in nature, if not in form, to those against which our Lord protested (Jer. vii. 11).

**A den of thieves.**—The pictorial vividness of the words must not be passed over. Palestine was then swarming with bands of outlaw brigands, who, as David of old in Adullam (1 Sam. xxii. 1), haunted the lime-stone caverns of Judæa. The wranglings of such a company over the booty they had carried off were prayer;[a] but ye have made it a den of thieves.[b] (14) And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them. (15) And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased, (16) and said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?[c]

(17) And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there. (18) Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. (19) And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it,[d] and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the

a Isa. 56. 7.
b Jer. 7. 11; Mark 11. 17; Luke 19. 46.
c Ps. 8. 2.
d Mark 11. 13.

reproduced in the Temple, and mingled with the Hallelujahs of the Levites and the Hosannas of the crowds. We ask, as we read the narrative, how it was that the work of expulsion was done so effectively, and with so little resistance. The answer is found (1) in the personal greatness and intensity of will that showed itself in our Lord's look and word and tone; (2) in the presence of the crowd that had followed Him from the Mount of Olives, and had probably filled the courts of the Temple; and (3) in the secret consciousness of the offenders that they were desecrating the Temple, and that the Prophet of Nazareth, in His zeal for His Father's house, was the witness of a divine truth.

(14) **The blind and the lame.**—These, as we see from Acts iii. 2, and probably from John ix. 1, thronged the approaches to the Temple, and asked alms of the worshippers. They now followed the great Healer into the Temple itself, and sought at His hands relief from their infirmities. If we were to accept the LXX. reading of the strange proverbial saying of 2 Sam. v. 8, "The blind and the lame shall not come into the house *of the Lord*," it would seem as if this were a departure from the usual regulations of the Temple; but the words in italics are not in the Hebrew. Most commentators give an entirely different meaning to the proverb, and there is no evidence from Jewish writers that the blind and the lame were ever, as a matter of fact, excluded from the Temple. All that we can legitimately infer from the two passages is the contrast between the hasty, passionate words of the conquering king, and the tender compassion of the Son of David, to whom the blind and the lame were objects, not of antipathy, but pity.

(15) **The chief priests.**—These, as commonly in the Gospels, were the heads of the twenty-four courses of the priesthood, as well as Annas and Caiaphas, who were designated by the title in its higher sense, the one as actually high priest, the other as president of the Sanhedrin. (See Note on Luke iii. 2.)

**The children.**—Literally, *the boys*, the noun being masculine. Taking the Jewish classification of ages, they would probably be from seven to fourteen years old, but in such a narrative as this the general phrase does not exclude younger children.

(16) **Hearest thou what these say?**—The priests and scribes had probably remained in the Temple, and had not heard the Hosannas which were raised on the Mount of Olives. The shouts of the children were therefore a surprise to them, and they turned to the Teacher and asked whether He accepted them in the sense in which they were addressed to Him. Had He really entered the Temple claiming to be the expected Christ? Did He approve this interruption of the order and quiet of its courts?

**Have ye never read?**—Better, *did ye never read?* The question was one which our Lord frequently asked in reasoning with the scribes who opposed Him (xii. 3, 5; xix. 4; xxi. 42; xxii. 31). It expressed very forcibly the estimate which He formed of their character as interpreters. They spent their lives in the study of the Law, and yet they perverted its meaning, and could not see its bearing on the events that passed around them. In this instance He cites the words of Ps. viii. 2, the primary meaning of which appears to be that the child's wonder at the marvels of Creation is the truest worship. As applied by our Lord their lesson was the same. The cries of the children were the utterance of a truth which the priests and scribes rejected. To Him, to whom the innocent brightness of childhood was a delight, they were more acceptable than the half-hearted, self-seeking homage of older worshippers. The words are quoted from the LXX. translation.

(17) **And went out of the city into Bethany.**—St. Mark, as already noticed, places the incident that follows on the morning that followed the triumphal entry, and before the cleansing. We have to choose, there being an obvious error of arrangement in one or other of the narratives, between the two, and the probability seems on the whole in favour of the more precise and more vivid record of St. Mark. The lodging at Bethany is explained partly by what we read in xxvi. 6—13, yet more by John xi. 1, 2, xii. 1. There He found in the house of the friends who were dear to Him the rest and peace which He could not find in the crowded city. The suppression of the name of those friends in the first three Gospels is every way significant, as suggesting that there were reasons which for a time (probably till the death of Lazarus) led all writers of the records which served as the basis of the Gospel history to abstain from the mention of any facts that might attract attention to them.

(18) **In the morning.**—The word implies "daybreak," probably about 5 A.M. This was the usual Jewish time for the first food of the day. If we may infer from Luke xxi. 37, John xviii. 1, that the greater part of the night had been spent either in solitary prayer or in converse with the disciples, we have an explanation of the exhaustion which sought food wherever there might seem even a chance of finding it.

(19) **In the way.**—Better, *on the road.* Fig-trees were often planted by the road-side under the notion that dust suited them.

**He came to it.**—St. Mark adds, what St. Matthew indeed implies, that He came, if "haply He might find anything thereon." The fig-tree in Palestine bears two or three crops a year. Josephus, indeed, says that fruit might be found on the trees in Judæa for ten months out of the twelve. Commonly at the beginning of April the trees that still grow out of the rocks between Bethany and Jerusalem are bare both of leaves and fruit, and so probably fig tree withered away. (20) And when the disciples saw *it*, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away! (21) Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this *which is done* to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. (22) And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

(23) And when he was come into the temple,[a] the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? (24) And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. (25) The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall

[a] Mark 11. 27; Luke 20. 1.

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it was now with all but the single tree which attracted our Lord's notice. It was in full foliage, and being so far in advance of its fellows it might not unnaturally have been expected to have had, in the first week of April, the "first ripe fruit" (Hos. ix. 10), which usually was gathered in May. So, in Song Sol. ii. 13, the appearance of the "green figs" coincides with that of the flowers of spring, and the time of the singing of birds. The illustrations from the branches and leaves of the fig-tree in Luke xxi. 29, 30, suggest that the season was a somewhat forward one. On the special difficulty connected with St. Mark's statement, "the time of figs was not yet," see Note on Mark xi. 13.

**Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever.**—From the lips of one of like passions with ourselves, the words might seem the utterance of impatient disappointment. Here they assume the character of a solemn judgment passed not so much on the tree as on that of which it became the representative. The Jews, in their show of the "leaves" of outward devotion, in the absence of the "fruits" of righteousness, were as that barren tree. But a few weeks before (Luke xiii. 6) He had taken the fig-tree to which "a man came seeking fruit and finding none," as a parable of the state of Israel. Then the sentence, "Cut it down," had been delayed, as in the hope of a possible amendment. Now, what He saw flashed upon Him in a moment (if we may so speak) as the parable embodied. The disappointment of the expectations which He had formed in His human craving for food was like the disappointment of the owner of the fig-tree in the parable. The sentence which He now passed on the tree, and its immediate fulfilment, were symbols of the sentence and the doom which were about to fall on the unrepentant and unbelieving people.

**Presently.**—The word is used in its older sense of "immediately." As with nearly all such words—"anon," "by and by," and the like—man's tendency to delay has lowered its meaning, and it now suggests the thought.

(20) **And when the disciples saw it.**—Here again St. Mark's narrative (xi. 20, 21) seems at once the fullest and the most precise. As he relates the facts, the disciples did not perceive that the fig-tree was withered away till they passed by on the following morning. Peter then remembered what had been said the day before, and, as the spokesman of the rest, drew his Master's attention to the fact. The immediate withering may have been inferred from its completeness when seen, or its beginning may have been noticed by some at the time.

(21) **If ye have faith, and doubt not.**—The promise, in its very form, excludes a literal fulfilment. The phrase to "remove mountains" (as in 1 Cor. xiii. 2) was a natural hyperbole for overcoming difficulties, and our Lord in pointing to "this mountain"—as He had done before to Hermon (xvii. 20)—did but give greater vividness to an illustration which the disciples would readily understand. A mere physical miracle, such as the removal of the mountain, could never be in itself the object of the prayer of a faith such as our Lord described. The hyperbole is used here, as elsewhere, to impress on men's mind the truth which lies beneath it.

(22) **All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer.**—Here again there is the implied condition (as in vii. 7) that what is asked is in harmony with the laws and will of God. If it were not so it would not be asked in faith, and every true prayer involves the submission of what it asks to the divine judgment. The words suggest the thought, of which we have the full expression in John xi. 42, that our Lord's miracles were less frequently wrought by an inherent supernatural "virtue"—though this, also, distinctly appears, *e.g.*, in the history of the woman with the issue of blood (Luke viii. 46)—than by power received from the Father, and in answer to His own prayers.

(23) **The chief priests and the elders.**—St. Matthew and St. Luke add "the scribes," thus including representatives of the three constituent elements of the Sanhedrin. The character of the teaching is further specified by St. Luke, "as He was preaching the gospel"—proclaiming, *i.e.*, the good news of the kingdom, the forgiveness of sins, and the law of righteousness.

**By what authority . . . ?**—The right to take the place of an instructor was, as a rule, conferred by the scribes, or their chief representative, on one who had studied "at the feet" of some great teacher, and been solemnly admitted (the delivery of a key, as the symbol of the right to interpret, being the outward token) to that office. The question implied that those who asked it knew that the Prophet of Nazareth had not been so admitted. The second question gave point to the first. Could He name the Rabbi who had trained Him, or authorised Him to teach?

(24) **I also will ask you one thing.**—The question is met by another question. As One who taught as "having authority, and not as the scribes" (vii. 29), He challenges their right to interrogate Him on the ground of precedent. Had they exercised that right in the case of the Baptist, and if so, with what result? If they had left his claim unquestioned, or if they had shrunk from confessing the result of their inquiry, they had virtually abdicated their office, and had no right, in logical consistency, to exercise it, as by fits and starts, in the case of another teacher.

(25) **They reasoned with themselves.**—The self-

say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? (26) But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet.[a] (27) And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

(28) But what think ye? A *certain* man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. (29) He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. (30) And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I *go*, sir: and went not. (31) Whether of them twain did the will of *his* father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. (32) For John came unto you in the way of righteousness,[b] and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen *it*, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

(33) Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard,[c] and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built

[a] ch. 14. 5.

[b] ch. 3. 1.

[c] Isa. 5. 1; Jer. 2. 21; Mark 12. 1; Luke 20. 9.

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communing was eminently characteristic. The priests and scribes had, in dealing with the mission of John, halted between two opinions. At one time they came to his baptism (iii. 7); at another they said, "He hath a devil" (xi. 18). They watched the ebb and flow of a public reverence which the death of John had deepened, and dared not repudiate his character as a prophet. They were reluctant to admit that character, for this would have involved the necessity of accepting the testimony which he had borne to the work and office of Jesus.

(27) **We cannot tell.**—The confession of impotence to which the priests and scribes were thus brought was, as has been said, a virtual abdication. Before such a tribunal the Prophet whom they called in question might well refuse to plead. There was, indeed, no need to answer. For those who were not wilfully blind and deaf, the words that He had spoken, the works which He had done, the sinless life which He had led, were proofs of an authority from God.

(28) **But what think ye?**—The question serves to connect the parable with the foregoing incident, and so gives point to its special primary application. In many MSS. the answers of the two sons are inverted, and it is accordingly the "second," and not the first, who is said, in verse 31, to have done the will of his Father.

**Go work to day in my vineyard.**—The parable rests on the same imagery as that of the Labourers, with some special variations. Both of those who are called to work are "sons," and not hired labourers—*i.e.*, there is a recognition of both Pharisees and publicans, the outwardly religious and the conspicuously irreligious, as being alike, in a sense, children of God.

(29) **I will not.**—The bold defiance of the answer answers to the rough recklessness of the classes (publicans and harlots) who were represented by the "first" of the two sons. Their whole life, up to the time of their conversion, had been an open refusal to keep God's laws, and so to work in His vineyard.

**He repented.**—The Greek word is not the same as that of iii. 2, and expresses rather the regretful change of purpose than entire transformation of character. It is the first stage of repentance, and may, as in this instance, pass on into the higher, or, as in the case of Judas (chap. xxvii. 3, where the same word is used), end only in remorse and despair.

(30) **I go, sir.**—The tone of outward respect, as contrasted with the rude refusal of the elder son, is eminently characteristic as representing the surface religion of the Pharisees.

(31) **They say unto him, The first.**—The answer came apparently from the lips of the very persons who were self-condemned by it, and so implied something like an unconsciousness that they were described in the person of the second son. They who gave God thanks that they were not like other men, could not imagine for an instant that the "went not" represented their spiritual life in relation to God's kingdom.

**The publicans and the harlots.**—The words are purposely general, as describing the action of classes; but we cannot help associating them with the personal instances of the publican who became an Apostle (ix. 9), and of Zacchæus (Luke xix. 2—10), and of the woman that was a sinner (Luke vii. 37—50).

**Go into the kingdom of God before you.**—Which literally means, *lead the way into.* What follows shows that our Lord is stating not so much a law of God's government as a simple fact. The choice of the word is significant as implying that there was still time for scribes and Pharisees to follow in the rear. The door was not yet closed against them, though those whom they despised had taken the place of honour and preceded them.

(32) **In the way of righteousness.**—The term seems used in a half-technical sense, as expressing the aspect of righteousness which the Pharisees themselves recognised (vi. 1), and which included, as its three great elements, the almsgiving, fasting, and prayer, that were so conspicuous both in the life and in the teaching of the Baptist.

**The publicans and the harlots believed him.**—The former class appear among the hearers of John in Luke iii. 12. The latter are not mentioned there, but it was natural they also should feel the impulse of the strong popular movement.

**Repented not afterwards.**—Better, *did not even repent afterwards.* The words are repeated from the parable (verse 29), and sharpen its application. In relation to the preaching of the Baptist, the scribes and Pharisees were like the first of the two sons in his defiant refusal; they were not like him in his subsequent repentance.

(33) **Which planted a vineyard.**—The frequent recurrence of this imagery at this period of our Lord's ministry is significant. (Comp. chap. xx. 1; xxi. 28; Luke xiii. 6.) The parable that now meets us points in the very form of its opening to the great example

a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: (34) and when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. (35) And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. (36) Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. (37) But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. (38) But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him,[a] and let us seize on his inheritance. (39) And they caught him, and cast *him* out of the vineyard, and slew *him*. (40) When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? (41) They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out *his* vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. (42) Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner:[b] this is the Lord's doing, and

[a] ch. 26. 3; John 11. 53.

[b] Ps. 118. 22; Acts 4. 11

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of the use of that image in Isa. v. 1. Taking the thought there suggested as the key to the parable, the vineyard is "the house of Israel;" the "fence" finds its counterpart in the institutions which made Israel a separate and peculiar people; the "wine-press" (better, *wine-vat*—*i.e.*, the reservoir underneath the press), in the Temple, as that into which the "wine" of devotion, and thanksgiving, and charity was to flow; the "tower" (used in vineyards as a place of observation and defence against the attacks of plunderers; comp. Isa. i. 8), in Jerusalem and the outward polity connected with it. So, in like manner, the letting out to husbandmen and the going "into a far country" answers historically to the conquest by which the Israelites became possessors of Canaan, and were left, as it were, to themselves to make what use they chose of their opportunities.

(34) **When the time of the fruit drew near.**—We must be content here with following the general drift of the parable, and cannot find any exact parallel in the history of Israel to the successive sendings of the servants of the householder. It is enough to see in them the general expectation (comp. the language of Isa. v. 4, "I looked that it should bring forth grapes") that the developed life of Israel should be worthy of its calling, and the mission of the prophets who, as the servants of Jehovah, were sent from time to time to call the people to bring forth the fruits of righteousness.

(35) **Beat one, and killed another.**—The language paints the general treatment of the prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zechariah the son of Jehoiada, being the most conspicuous instances. The language of our Lord in xxiii. 30, 34, not less than that of Heb. xi. 37, implies that the prophets, as a class, had no light or easy task, and were called upon, one by one, to suffer persecution for the faithful exercise of their office.

(36) **Other servants more than the first.**—There is, perhaps, a reference here to the greater power and fulness of the work of the later prophets, such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, stretching onward to that of the Baptist, as closing the whole line.

(37) **Last of all.**—The variations in the other Gospels are noticeable as more vivid and dramatic. "He had yet one son, his beloved" (Mark xii. 6). "He said, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son, it may be they will reverence him" (Luke xx. 13). The language of deliberation and doubt is evidently inapplicable, except by a bold anthropomorphism, to divine acts, but it sets forth (1) the gradually ascending scale of those who were sent, culminating in a difference not of degree only, but of kind, like the contrast between the prophets and the Son in Heb. i. 1, 2; and (2) the employment by God, in His long-suffering pity, of all possible means to lead His people to repentance.

(38) **This is the heir.**—What we learn elsewhere enables us to understand the feelings with which the priests and scribes must have heard these words. Already had Caiaphas given the counsel that one man should die for the people (John xi. 49), while among those who knew it, and did not protest, were many who believed on Him, and yet, through fear of the Pharisees, were not confessed disciples (John xii. 42). The words of the parable showed that they stood face to face with One who knew the secrets of their hearts, and had not deceived Himself as to the issue of the conflict in which He was now engaged.

(39) **Cast him out of the vineyard.**—The minor touches of a parable are not always to be pressed in our interpretation of it; but we can hardly help seeing here a latent reference to the facts (1) that our Lord was delivered over to the judgment of the Gentiles; and (2) that He was crucified outside the Holy City, (John xix. 20; Heb. xiii. 12), which was, in a special sense, as the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts.

(41) **They say unto him . . .**—The fact that the answer to the question came, not from the speaker, but from the hearers of the parable, is peculiar to St. Matthew. On the assumption that those who gave the answer were the scribes and Pharisees, we may see in it either a real unconsciousness that they were as the men on whom the punishment was to fall (see Note on verse 31), or, more probably, an affected horror, by which they sought to disguise the conviction that the parable was meant for them. They would not admit, in the presence of the multitude, that they winced at this intimation that their designs were known.

**Those wicked men.**—Better, *those miserable men*, the adjective being the same as the preceding adverb. Their answer, like the speech of Caiaphas in John xi. 49—51, was an unconscious prophecy, in which were wrapt up at once the destruction of the Holy City, and the transfer of the privileges that had belonged to Israel to the Gentile Church, which was to grow into Catholic Christendom. The Lord of the vineyard would not be robbed of its fruits, and sooner or later would find faithful and true labourers.

(42) **Did ye never read . . . ?**—The quotation is remarkable as being found (Ps. cxviii. 22) in the immediate context of the verse which had supplied the "hosanna" shouts of the multitude on the preceding day. In the primary meaning of the Psalm, the illus-

it is marvellous in our eyes? (43) Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. (44) And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken:[a] but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. (45) And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. (46) But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.

CHAPTER XXII.—(1) And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables,[b] and said, (2) The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, (3) and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding:

A.D. 33.

[a] Isa. 8. 14; Rom. 9. 33; 1 Pet. 2. 7.
[b] Luke 14. 16; Rev. 19. 9.

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tration seems to have been drawn from one of the stones, quarried, hewn, and marked, away from the site of the Temple, which the builders, ignorant of the head architect's plans, had put on one side, as having no place in the building, but which was found afterwards to be that on which the completeness of the structure depended, that on which, as the chief corner-stone, the two walls met and were bonded together. The Psalmist saw in this a parable of the choice of David to be king over Israel; perhaps, also, of the choice of Israel itself out of the nations of the world. Elsewhere, as in Eph. ii. 20, and in the language of later ages, Christ Himself is the chief corner-stone. Here the context gives a somewhat different application, and "the stone which the builders rejected" is found in the future converts from among the Gentiles, the nation bringing forth the fruits which Israel had not brought forth—the "corner-stone" of the great edifice of the Catholic Church of Christ. This meaning was obviously not incompatible with the other. As the mind of the Psalmist included both David and Israel under the same symbolism, so here the Christ identifies Himself, more or less completely, with the Church which is His body. (Comp. Eph. i. 22, 23.)

(44) **Whosoever shall fall on this stone.**—There is a manifest reference to the "stumbling and falling and being broken" of Isa. viii. 14, 15. In the immediate application of the words, those who "fell" were those who were "offended" at the outward lowliness of Him who came as the carpenter's son, and died a malefactor's death. That "fall" brought with it pain and humiliation. High hopes had to be given up, the proud heart to be bruised and broken. But there the fall was not irretrievable. The bruise might be healed; it was the work of the Christ to heal it. But when it fell on him who was thus offended (here there is a rapid transition to the imagery and the thoughts, even to the very words, of Dan. ii. 35, 44), when Christ, or that Church which He identifies with Himself, shall come into collision with the powers that oppose Him, then it shall "grind them to powder." The primary meaning of the word so rendered is that of winnowing by threshing the grain, and so separating it from the chaff, and its use was probably suggested by the imagery of Dan. ii. 35, where the gold and silver and baser materials that made up the image of Nebuchadnezzar's vision were "broken in pieces together, and became as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor." In its wider meaning it includes the destruction of all that resists Christ's kingdom, and so represents the positive side of the truth which has its negative expression in the promise that "the gates of hell shall not prevail" against His Church (xvi. 18).

(45) **They perceived that he spake of them.**—The real or affected unconsciousness of the drift of our Lord's teaching was at last broken through. The last words had been too clear and pointed to leave any room for doubt, and they were roused to a passionate desire for revenge.

(46) **When they sought to lay hands.**—We must remember that they had once before made a like attempt, and had been baffled (John vii. 44—46). Now circumstances were even more against them. The Prophet was surrounded by His own disciples, and by an admiring crowd. Open violence they did not dare to venture on, and they had to fall back upon the more crooked paths of stratagem and treachery.

## XXII.

(1) **And Jesus answered.**—The word implies a connection of some kind with what has gone before. The parable was an answer, if not to spoken words, to the thoughts that were stirring in the minds of those who listened.

(2) **Which made a marriage for his son.**—The germ of the thought which forms the groundwork of the parable is found, in a passing allusion, in Luke xii. 36—"When he shall return from the wedding." Here, for the first time, it appears in a fully developed form. The parable of Luke xiv. 15—24 is not specially connected with the idea of a *wedding* feast. The thought itself rested, in part at least, on the language of the older prophets, who spoke of God as the Bridegroom, and Israel as His bride (Isa. lxii. 5), who thought of the idolatries of Israel as the adultery of the faithless wife (Jer. iii. 1—4) who had abandoned the love of her espousals (Jer. ii. 2). Here the prominent idea is that of the guests who are invited to the feast. The interpretation of the parable lies, so far, almost on the surface. The king is none other than God, and the wedding is that between Christ and His Church, the redeemed and purified Israel (Rev. xix. 7—9). We have to remember the truth, which the form of the parable excludes, that the guests themselves, so far as they obey the call, and are clothed in the wedding garment, are, in their collective unity, the Church which is the bride. (Comp. Eph. v. 23—27.)

(3) **Sent forth his servants.**—As in the parable of the Vineyard (chap. xxi. 33—46), the servants represent the aggregate work of the prophets up to the time of the Baptist. The refusal of guests invited to what seems to us so great an honour may seem, at first sight, so contrary to human nature as to be wanting in the element of dramatic probability. That refusal, however, would be natural enough, we must remember, in subjects who were in heart rebellious and disloyal; and it is precisely that character which the parable was intended to portray. The summons, it may be noted, came in the first instance to those who had long ago

and they would not come. (4) Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and *my* fatlings *are* killed, and all things *are* ready: come unto the marriage. (5) But they made light of *it*, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: (6) and the remnant took his servants, and entreated *them* spitefully, and slew *them*. (7) But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. (8) Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. (9) Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. (10) So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

(11) And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: (12) and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.

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been "bidden" to the wedding. The proclamation of the kingdom was addressed to the Jews, who, as such, had all along been children of the kingdom.

(4) **My dinner.**—The Greek word points to a morning meal, as contrasted with the "supper," or evening meal; but, like all such words (as, *e.g.*, our own dinner), was applied, as time passed on, to meals at very different hours. In Homer it is used of food taken at sunrise; in later authors, of the repast of noon.

**My oxen and my fatlings are killed.**—The words point, under an imagery which Isaiah had already used (xxv. 6), to the spiritual blessings of peace and joy which Christ came to offer. In the "fatlings" we have nearly the same word as in the "fatted calf" of Luke xv. 30.

(5) **They made light of it.**—The words point to the temper of neglect which slights the offer of the kingdom of God, and prefers the interest of this world. This was one form of neglect. Another ran parallel with it, and passed on into open antagonism.

(6) **Entreated them spitefully.**—The Greek word implies the wanton infliction of outrage. The parable at this stage looks forward as well as backward, and seems to include the sufferings of Christian preachers and martyrs as well as those of the prophets who were sent to Israel.

(7) **He sent forth his armies.**—As in other parables that shadow forth the judgment of the Son of Man, the words find an approximate fulfilment, first, in the destruction of Jerusalem, and afterwards, in all times of trouble that fall upon nations and churches as the punishment of unbelief and its consequent unrighteousness. The word "armies" suggests in its modern use, action on a larger scale than that indicated by the Greek. Better, *troops*.

(9) **Into the highways.**—Literally, *the openings of the ways*, the places where two or more roads met, and where, therefore, there was a greater probability of meeting way-farers. In the interpretation of the parable, we may see in this feature of it a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles, and find an apt illustration of it in St. Paul's words when he turned from the Jews of the Pisidian Antioch who counted themselves "unworthy of eternal life" (Acts xiii. 46) to the Gentiles who were willing to receive it.

(10) **Both bad and good.**—The words imply, as in the parable of the Drag-net (xiii. 47, 48), (1) the universality of the offer of the gospel, so that none were shut out through any previous sins; (2) that the assembly of the guests so gathered answers to the visible Church of Christ in which the evil are mingled with the good, waiting for the coming of the King "to see the guests."

**The wedding was furnished.**—Some of the most ancient MSS. give "the *bride-chamber* was furnished;" but it looks like a gloss or explanatory note.

(11) **To see the guests.**—The verb conveys the idea of inspecting. The king came to see whether all the guests had fulfilled the implied condition of coming in suitable apparel. The framework of the parable probably pre-supposes the Oriental custom of providing garments for the guests who were invited to a royal feast. Wardrobes filled with many thousand garments formed part of the wealth of every Eastern prince (chap. vi. 19; Jas. v. 2), and it was part of his glory, as in the case of the assembly which Jehu held for the worshippers of Baal (2 Kings x. 22), to bring them out for use on state occasions. On this assumption, the act of the man who was found "not having a wedding garment" was one of wilful insult. He came in the "filthy rags" (Isa. lxiv. 6) of his old life, instead of putting on the "white linen" meet for a kingly feast (Eccles. ix. 8; Rev. iii. 4, 5) which had been freely offered him. Even without this assumption, the parable pre-supposes that the man might easily have got the garment, and that it was, therefore, his own fault that he had it not. What, then, is the "wedding garment?" Answers have been returned to that question from very different dogmatic standpoints. Some have seen in it the outward ordinance of Baptism, some the imputed righteousness of Christ covering the nakedness of our own unrighteousness. These answers, it is believed, are at once too narrow and too technical. The analogy of Scriptural symbolism elsewhere (Rev. iii. 4, 5, 18; xix. 8; 1 Pet. v. 5; Isa. i. 18; Ps. cix. 18), leads us to see in the "garment" of a man the habits of good or evil by which his character is manifested to others. Here, therefore, the "wedding garment" is nothing less than the "holiness" without which "no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. xii. 14), and that holiness, as in the framework of the parable and in the realities of the spiritual life, Christ is ever ready to impart to him that truly believes. It is obvious that no inference can be drawn from the fact that in the parable one guest only is without the wedding garment, any more than from there being only one "wicked and slothful servant" in the parables of the Talents and the Pounds.

(12) **Friend.**—(See Note on xx. 13.) The question implies that the act was strange, unlooked-for, inexcusable.

(13) Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (14) For many are called,[a] but few *are* chosen.

(15) Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in *his* talk.[b] (16) And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any *man:* for thou regardest not the person of men. (17) Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to

[b] Mark 12. 13; Luke 20. 20.

[a] ch. 20. 16.

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**He was speechless.**—The verb is the same as the "put to silence" of verse 34, and points literally to the silence of one who has been gagged.

(13) **Take him away.**—The words are wanting in many of the best MSS., and may have been inserted to meet the supposed difficulty of the man being simply "thrust out" after he had been bound hand and foot.

**Into outer darkness.**—The description is reproduced from chap. viii. 12, and, in part also, from chap. xiii. 50. (See Notes on those passages.) Here it is emphasized by the contrast between the bridal-chamber, with its lights, and mirth, and music, and the midnight darkness outside the palace, filled with the despairing groans of those who were excluded from the feast.

(14) **Many are called.**—(See Note on chap. xx. 16.) The "calling" answers, both verbally and in substance, to the "bidding" or invitation of the parable. The "chosen" are those who both accept the invitation and comply with its condition; those who, in the one parable, work in the vineyard, and in the other, array themselves with the wedding garment of holiness. The "choice," as far as the parable is concerned, appears as dependent upon the answer given to the calling. The further truth of an election "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father" (1 Pet. i. 2) is not here within view, but it follows necessarily on the assumption of that foreknowledge. The "choice," which in the parable comes as the close of all, must be thought of as having been present to the mind of the All-knowing from all eternity. No one can fix time-limits for the thoughts of God, and say that at such a time a purpose came into His mind as it comes into the minds of men. We are compelled in such matters to use anthropomorphic language, but we should remember, as we do so, its necessary limitations.

(15) **How they might entangle him.**—Literally, *ensnare.* The phrase is identical in meaning with our colloquial "set a trap." The plot implies that they did not dare to take measures openly against Him as long as popular feeling was at the same level.

(16) **With the Herodians.**—The party thus described are known to us only through the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark; and their precise relation to the other sects or schools among the Jews are consequently matters of conjecture. The form of the name (like *Mariani, Pompeiani*, and, we may add, *Christiani*) is Latin, and may be noted as an example of the influence of that language in the public life of Palestine. The Herodians were known, first to the Romans and then to the people, as adherents of the house of the Herods. In what sense they were adherents, and why they now joined with the Pharisees, is less clear; and two distinct theories have been maintained: (1) That, as it was the general policy of all the princes of the Herodian family to court the favour of Rome, their partisans were those who held that it was lawful to "give tribute to Cæsar." On this supposition the narrative brings before us the coalition of two parties usually opposed to each other, but united against a common foe. (2) That they were partisans of the Herods, in the sense of looking to them to restore the independence of the nation, and were therefore of one mind with the Pharisees on the tribute question, though they differed from them on most other points. A fact recorded by Jewish writers probably gives us the origin of the party. In the early days of Herod the Great, when Hillel, the great scribe, was at the height of his fame, he had as his colleague, Menahem, possibly the Essene of that name of whom Josephus tells us that he prophesied Herod's future greatness (*Ant.* xv. 10, § 5). The latter was tempted by the king's growing power, and, with eighty followers, entered into his service, forsook the ranks of the Pharisees, and appeared in gorgeous apparel, glittering with gold (Jost, *Gesch. Judenthums*, i. 259; see Note on chap. xi. 8). In Mark iii. 6 we find them at Capernaum conspiring with the Pharisees who had come from Jerusalem, and are thus led to see in their present action a renewal of the previous alliance. A comparison of chap. xvi. 6 and Mark viii. 15 suggests a general affinity with the policy and tenets of the Sadducees. From St. Luke (xxiii. 7) we learn the fact that the Tetrarch himself (and therefore probably his followers) was at this time at Jerusalem, so that the renewed combination was natural enough. On the whole, the drift of the facts seems towards the conclusion that they were advocates of national submission to the emperor rather than assertors of independence.

**Master, we know that thou art true.**—Insidious as the praise was, intended, as it were, to goad Him who was thus addressed into showing, by some rash utterance, that He deserved it, it may be noted as an admission from the lips of adversaries of the supreme truthfulness and fearlessness of our Lord's teaching. The record of our Lord's Jerusalem ministry in St. John's Gospel (*e.g.*, chaps. iii., v., vii., viii., ix.) presents us with many of the occasions to which the Pharisees tacitly referred.

(17) **Is it lawful to give tribute . . ?**—The question was obviously framed as a dilemma. If answered in the affirmative, the Pharisees would be able to denounce Him to the people as a traitor to His country, courting the favour of their heathen oppressors. If in the negative, the Herodians (on the assumption which seems the more probable) could accuse Him, as He was eventually accused, of "perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar" (Luke xxiii. 2).

**Tribute.**—The original gives the Latin "census," *i.e.*, the poll-tax of a *denarius* per head, assessed on the whole population, the publicans being bound to transmit the sum so collected to the Roman treasury. As being a direct personal tax it was looked on by the more zealous Jews as carrying with it a greater humiliation than export or import duties, and was consequently resisted (as by Judas of Galilee and his followers) by many who acquiesced more or less readily in the payment of the customs (Acts v. 37).

give tribute unto Cæsar, or not? (18) But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, *ye* hypocrites? (19) Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny.[1] (20) And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription?[2] (21) They say unto him, Cæsar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's.[a] (22) When they had heard *these words*, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

(23) The same day came to him the Sadducees,[b] which say that there is no resurrection,[c] and asked him, (24) saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.[d] (25) Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: (26) likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. (27) And last of all the woman died also. (28) Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her. (29) Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power

[c] Acts 23. 8.

[1] *In value sevenpence halfpenny*; ch. 20. 2.

[d] Deut. 25. 5.

[2] Or, *inscription*.

[a] Rom. 13. 7.

[b] Mark 12. 18; Luke 20. 27.

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(18) **Ye hypocrites.**—The special form of the hypocrisy was that the questioners had come, not avowedly as disputants, but as "just men" (Luke xx. 20) perplexed in conscience and seeking guidance as from One whom they really honoured.

(19) **Shew me the tribute money.**—The parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard (xx. 2) indicates that the *denarius* was in common circulation. It was probably part of the fiscal regulation of the Roman government that the poll-tax should be paid in that coin only. In any case, wherever it passed current, it was a witness that the independence of the country had passed away, and that Cæsar was in temporal things its real ruler.

(20) **Image and superscription.**—Better, *inscription.* The coin brought would probably be a silver *denarius* of Tiberius, bearing on the face the head of the emperor, with the inscription running round it containing his name and titles.

(21) **Render therefore unto Cæsar.**—As far as the immediate question was concerned, this was of course an answer in the affirmative. It recognised the principle that the acceptance of the emperor's coinage was an admission of his *de facto* sovereignty. But the words that followed raised the discussion into a higher region, and asserted implicitly that that admission did not interfere with the true spiritual freedom of the people, or with their religious duties. They might still "render to God the things that were His"—*i.e.* (1), the tithes, tribute, offerings which belonged to the polity and worship that were the appointed witnesses of His sovereignty, and (2) the faith, love, and obedience which were due to Him from every Israelite. The principle which the words involved was obviously wider in its range than the particular occasion to which it was thus applied. In all questions of real or seeming collision between secular authority and spiritual freedom, the former claims obedience as a *de facto* ordinance of God up to the limit where it encroaches on the rights of conscience, and prevents men from worshipping and serving Him. Loyal obedience in things indifferent on the part of the subject, a generous tolerance (such as the Roman empire at this time exercised towards the religion of Israel) on the part of the State, were the two correlative elements upon which social order and freedom depended. Questions might arise, as they have arisen in all ages of the Church, as to whether the limit has, or has not, been transgressed in this or that instance, and for these the principle does not, and in the nature of things could not, provide a direct answer. What it does prescribe is that all such questions should be approached in the temper which seeks to reconcile the two obligations, not in that which exaggerates and perpetuates their antagonism. Least of all does it sanction the identification of the claims of this or that form of ecclesiastical polity with the "things that are God's."

(22) **They marvelled.**—We can picture to ourselves the surprise which the conspirators felt at thus finding themselves baffled where they thought success so certain. The Herodians could not charge the Teacher with forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar. The Pharisees found the duty of giving to God what belonged to Him pressed as strongly as they had ever pressed it. They had to change their tactics, and to fall back upon another plan of attack.

(23–28) **The Sadducees.**—(See Note on chap. iii. 7.) These, we must remember, consisted largely of the upper class of the priesthood (Acts v. 17). The form of their attack implies that they looked on our Lord as teaching the doctrine of the resurrection. They rested their denial on the ground that they found no mention of it in the Law, which they recognised as the only rule of faith. The case which they put, as far as the principle involved was concerned, need not have gone beyond any case of re-marriage without issue, but the questioners pushed it to its extreme, as what seemed to them a *reductio ad absurdum.* Stress is laid on the childlessness of the woman in all the seven marriages in order to guard against the possible answer that she would be counted in the resurrection as the wife of him to whom she had borne issue.

(29) **Ye do err.**—This is, it may be noted, the one occasion in the Gospel history in which our Lord comes into direct collision with the Sadducees. On the whole, while distinctly condemning and refuting their characteristic error, the tone in which He speaks is less stern than that in which He addresses the Pharisees. They were less characterised by hypocrisy, and that, as the *pessima corruptio optimi*, was that which called down His sternest reproof. The causes of their error were, He told them, two-fold: (1) an imperfect knowledge even of the Scriptures which they recognised; (2) imperfect conceptions of the divine attributes, and therefore an *à priori* limitation of the divine power. They could not conceive of any human fellowship in the life of the resurrection except such as reproduced the relations and conditions of this earthly life.

of God. (30) For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. (31) But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, (32) I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?[a] God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. (33) And when the multitude heard *this,* they were astonished at his doctrine.

(34) But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence,[b] they were gathered together. (35) Then one of them, *which was* a lawyer, asked *him a question,* tempting him, and saying, (36) Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law? (37) Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt

[a] Ex. 3. 6.

[b] Mark 12. 28.

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(30) **They neither marry, nor are given in marriage.**—In St. Luke's report (xx. 34, 35) our Lord emphasises the contrast in this respect between the children of this world and the children of the resurrection. His words teach absolutely the absence from the resurrection life of the definite relations on which marriage rests in this, and they suggest an answer to the yearning questions which rise up in our minds as we ponder on the things behind the veil. Will there, we ask, be no continuance there of the holiest of the ties of earth? Will the husband and the wife, who have loved each other until death parted them, be no more to each other than any others who are counted worthy to obtain that life? Will there be no individual recognition, no continuance of the love founded upon the memories of the past? The answer to all such questionings is found in dwelling on the "power of God." The old relations may subsist under new conditions. Things that are incompatible here may there be found to co-exist. The saintly wife of two saintly husbands may love both with an angelic, and therefore a pure and unimpaired affection. The contrast between our Lord's teaching and the sensual paradise of Mahomet, or Swedenborg's dream of the marriage state perpetuated under its earthly conditions, is so obvious as hardly to call for notice.

(31) **That which was spoken unto you by God.**—In St. Mark and St. Luke we find the addition "at the bush," the words probably being a reference to the section of the Law containing Ex. iii., and known by that title. There are, it need scarcely be said, many passages scattered here and there through the Old Testament (such, *e.g.*, as Job xix. 25, 26; Ps. xvi. 10, 11; Dan. xii. 2) in which the hope of immortality, and even of a resurrection, is expressed with greater clearness; but our Lord meets the Sadducees on their own ground, and quotes from the Law which they recognised as of supreme authority. The principle implied in the reasoning is, that the union of the divine Name with that of a man, as in "I am the God of Abraham," involved a relation existing, not in the past only, but when the words were uttered. They meant something more than "I am the God whom Abraham worshipped in the past." But if the relation was a permanent one, then it followed that those whose names were thus joined with the name of God were living and not dead.

(33) **They were astonished at his doctrine.**—Better, *teaching.* The wonder was apparently caused by the way in which the truth of the popular creed had been proved from words which seemed to the careless reader to be altogether remote from it. It was the mode of teaching rather than the doctrine taught that astonished them. The other Gospels (Mark xii. 28, Luke xx. 39) record the admiration of agreement ("Master, Thou hast well spoken") as well as astonishment. The better section of the Pharisees rejoiced to hear their opponents refuted with what seemed to them a greater dexterity than that of their ablest scribes.

(34) **Had put the Sadducees to silence.**—The primary meaning of the Greek verb is to stop a man's power of speaking with a gag, and even in its wider use it retains the sense of putting men to a coerced and unwilling silence. (Comp. 1 Pet. ii. 15.)

(35) **A lawyer.**—The precise distinction between the "lawyer" and the other scribes rested, probably, on technicalities that have left little or no trace behind them. The word suggests the thought of a section of the scribes who confined their attention to the Law, while the others included in their studies the writings of the Prophets also. In Luke vii. 30, xi. 45, they appear as distinct from the Pharisees. The question asked by the "lawyer" here and in Luke x. 25 falls in with this view. So it would seem, in Titus iii. 13, that Zenas the "lawyer" was sent for to settle the strivings about the Law that prevailed in Crete.

**Tempting him.**—There does not appear to have been in this instance any hostile purpose in the mind of the questioner; nor does the word necessarily imply it. (Comp. John vi. 6; 2 Cor. xiii. 5, where it is used in the sense of "trying," "examining.") It would seem, indeed, as if our Lord's refutation of the Sadducees had drawn out a certain measure of sympathy and reverence from those whose minds were not hardened in hypocrisy. They came now to test His teaching on other points. What answer would He give to the much-debated question of the schools, as to which was the great commandment of the Law? Would He fix on circumcision, or the Sabbath, or tithes, or sacrifice, as that which held the place of pre-eminence? The fact that they thus, as it were, examined Him as if they were His judges, showed an utterly imperfect recognition of His claims as a Prophet and as the Christ; but the "lawyer" who appeared as their representative was, at least, honest in his purpose, and "not far from the kingdom of God" (Mark xii. 34).

(36) **Which is the great commandment . . ?**—Literally, *of what kind.* The questioner asked as if it belonged to a class. Our Lord's answer is definite, "*This* is the first and great commandment."

(37) **Thou shalt love the Lord thy God.**—In St. Mark's report (xii. 29) our Lord's answer begins with the Creed of Israel ("Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord"), and so the truth is in its right position as the foundation of the duty. It is significant (1) that the answer comes from the same chapter (Deut. vi. 4, 5) which supplied our Lord with two out of His three answers to the Tempter (see Notes on chap. iv. 4, 7); and (2) that He does but repeat the answer that had been given before by the "certain lawyer" who stood up tempting Him, in Luke x. 25. In their ethical teaching the Pharisees had grasped the truth intellectually, though they did not realise it in

love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,[a] and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. (38) This is the first and great commandment. (39) And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.[b] (40) On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

(41) While the Pharisees were gathered together,[c] Jesus asked them, (42) saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The son* of David. (43) He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, (44) The Lord said unto my Lord,[d] Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? (45) If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? (46) And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any *man* from that day forth ask him any more *questions.*

[d] Ps. 110. 1.

[a] Deut. 6. 5; Luke 10. 27. 30.

[b] Lev. 19. 18.

A.D. 33.

[c] Mark 12. 35; Luke 20. 41.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

—(1) Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, (2) saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: (3) all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and

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their lives, and our Lord did not shrink, therefore, so far, from identifying His teaching with theirs. Truth was truth, even though it was held by the Pharisees and coupled with hypocrisy.

(39) **Thou shalt love thy neighbour.**—The words were found, strangely enough, in the book which is, for the most part, pre-eminently ceremonial (Lev. xix. 18), and it is to the credit of the Pharisees, as ethical teachers, that they, too, had drawn the law, as our Lord now drew it, from its comparative obscurity, and gave it a place of dignity second only to that of the first and great commandment.

(40) **All the law and the prophets.**—The words are coupled, as in chaps. v. 17, vii. 12, to indicate the whole of the revelation of the divine will in the Old Testament. The two great commandments lay at the root of all. The rest did but expand and apply them; or, as in the ceremonial, set them forth symbolically; or, as in the law of slavery and divorce, confined their application within limits, which the hardness of men's hearts made necessary. For the glowing assent of the scribe to our Lord's teaching, and our Lord's approval of him, see Notes on Mark xii. 32—34.

(41) **While the Pharisees were gathered together.**—St. Mark and St. Luke add here, as St. Matthew does in verse 46, that "no man dared ask Him any more questions." They have recourse from this time forth to measures of another kind, and fall back upon treachery and false witness. It was now His turn to appear as the questioner, and to convict the Pharisees of resting on the mere surface even of the predictions which they quoted most frequently and most confidently as Messianic.

(42) **The son of David.**—Both question and answer gain a fresh significance from the fact that the name had been so recently uttered in the Hosannas of the multitude (chap. xxi. 9, 15). The Pharisees are ready at once with the traditional answer; but they have never asked themselves whether it conveyed the whole truth, whether it could be reconciled, and if so, how, with the language of predictions that were confessedly Messianic.

(43) **Doth David in spirit call him Lord?**—The words assume (1) that David was the writer of Psalm cx.; (2) that in writing it, he was guided by a Spirit higher than his own; (3) that the subject of it was no earthly king of the house of David, but the far-off Christ. On this point there was an undisturbed *consensus* among the schools of Judaism, as represented by the Targums and the Talmud. It was a received tradition that the Christ should sit on the right hand of Jehovah and Abraham on His left. Its application to the Christ is emphatically recognised by St. Peter (Acts ii. 34), and by St. Paul, though indirectly (Col. iii. 1). In the argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews, it occupies well-nigh the chief place of all (Heb. i. 3; v. 6). The only hypothesis on which any other meaning can be assigned to it is, that it was written, not by David, but of him. Here it will be enough to accept our Lord's interpretation, and to track the sequence of thought in His question. The words represent the Lord (*Jehovah*) as speaking to David's Lord (*Adonai*), as the true king, the anointed of Jehovah. But if so, what was the meaning of that lofty title? Must not He who bore it be something more than the son of David by mere natural descent? If the scribes had never even asked themselves that question, were they not self-convicted of incompetency as religious teachers?

### XXIII.

(1) **To the multitude.**—Now, as in chap. xv. 10, but here more fully and emphatically, our Lord not only reproves the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, but warns the multitude against them. He appeals, as it were, to the unperverted conscience of the people, as against the perversions of their guides. In some points, as, *e.g.*, in verses 16—21, it presents a striking parallel to the Sermon on the Mount (chap. v. 33—37). Our Lord closes His public teaching, as He began, by a protest against that false casuistry which had substituted the traditions of men for the commandments of God.

(2) **The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.**—The words were probably spoken of their collective action as represented in the Sanhedrin, rather than of their individual work as interpreters of the Law. As such, they claimed to be the authoritative exponents of the Law, and our Lord recognises (unless we suppose a latent protest in His words, like that which is veiled in the "full well ye reject" of Mark vii. 9) their official claim to reverence.

(3) **All therefore whatsoever . . .**—Followed, as the words are, by repeated protests against special and grave errors in the teaching of the Pharisees, it is obvious that they must be received with an implied limitation. So far as they really sit in Moses' seat, and set forth his teaching—as, *e.g.*, the scribe had done whose answer has been just recorded—they were to be followed with all obedience. That which was wanting was the life, without which even the highest maxims of morality became but the common-places of rhetorical declamation. It was one thing to "draw fine pictures

do not. (4) For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders;[a] but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers. (5) But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries,[b] and enlarge the borders of their garments, (6) and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,[c] (7) and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. (8) But be not ye called Rabbi:[d] for one is your Master, *even* Christ;

[a] Luke 11. 46.

[c] Mark 12. 38; Luke 11. 43.

[d] Jas. 3. 1.

[b] Num. 15. 38; Deut. 22. 12.

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of virtue," and another to bring thought and word and deed into conformity with them.

(4) **Heavy burdens.**—The thought was involved in our Lord's call to the "heavy laden," in the words that spoke of His own "burden" as "light" (chap. xi. 28, 30). Here it finds distinct expression. That it appealed to the witness which men's hearts were bearing, secretly or openly, we see from St. Peter's confession in Acts xv. 10.

**They themselves will not move . . .**—The rigorous precepts, the high-flown morality were for others, not themselves. Professing to guide, they neither helped nor sympathised with the troubles of those they taught. (Comp. Rom. ii. 17—23.)

(5) **To be seen of men.**—As with a clear insight into the root-evil of Pharisaism, and of all kindred forms of the religious life, our Lord fixes, as before in chap. vi. 1—18, on the love of man's applause as that which vitiated the highest ethical teaching and the most rigorous outward holiness. The fact, which we learn from John xii. 42, 43, that many "among the chief rulers" were in their hearts convinced of His claims, and yet were afraid to confess Him, gives a special emphasis to the rebuke. They may have been among those who listened to it with the consciousness that He spake of them.

**Phylacteries.**—The Greek word (*phylacterion*) from which the English is derived signifies "safe-guard or preservative," and was probably applied under the idea that the phylacteries were charms or amulets against the evil eye or the power of evil spirits. This was the common meaning of the word in later Greek, and it is hardly likely to have risen among the Hellenistic Jews to the higher sense which has sometimes been ascribed to it, of being a means to keep men in mind of the obligations of the Law. Singularly enough, it is not used by the LXX. translators for the "frontlets" of Ex. xiii. 16, Deut. vi. 8, xi. 18 and the only place in the Old Testament where it is found is for the "cushions" of Ezek. xiii. 18. The Hebrew word in common use from our Lord's time onward has been *tephillîn*, or Prayers. The things so named were worn by well-nigh all Jews as soon as they became Children of the Law, *i.e.*, at thirteen. They consisted of a small box containing the four passages in which frontlets are mentioned (Ex. xiii. 2—10, 11—16; Deut. vi. 4—9; xi. 13—22), written on four slips of vellum for the phylactery of the head, and on one for that of the arm. This is fastened by a loop to thin leather straps, which are twisted in the one case round the arm, with the box on the heart, in the other, round the head, with the box on the brow. They were worn commonly during the act of prayer (hence the Hebrew name), and by those who made a show of perpetual devotion and study of the Law, during the whole day. The Pharisees, in their ostentatious show of piety, made either the box or the straps wider than the common size, and wore them as they walked to and fro in the streets, or prayed standing (chap. vi. 5), that men might see and admire them.

**The borders of their garments.**—The word is the same as the "hem" of the garment (chap. ix. 20) worn by our Lord. The practice rested on Num. xv. 37—41, which enjoined a "ribband" or "thread" of blue (the colour symbolical of heaven) to be put into the fringe or tassels of the outer cloak or plaid. The other threads were white, and the number of threads 613, as coinciding with the number of precepts in the Law, as counted by the scribes. The fringes in question were worn, as we see, by our Lord (see Notes on chap. ix. 20; xiv. 36), and probably by the disciples. It was reserved for the Pharisees to make them so conspicuous as to attract men's notice.

(6) **The uppermost rooms.**—Better, *the first places*, the word "room," which had that meaning at the time when the English version was made, having now become identical with "chamber." Strictly speaking, they would be the first places, nearest to the host, on the couches or ottomans (as we have learnt to call them from their modern Eastern use) on which the guests reclined, these being assigned (as in the case of "the disciple whom Jesus loved," in John xiii. 23) to the most favoured guests.

**The chief seats in the synagogues.**—These were at the upper or Jerusalem end of the synagogue (corresponding to the east end of most Christian churches), where was the ark, or chest that contained the Law. These were given, either by common consent or by the elders of the synagogue, to those who were most conspicuous for their devotion to the Law, and as such, were coveted as a mark of religious reputation.

(7) **Greetings in the markets.**—The greetings referred to were more than the familiar "Peace with thee," and involved the language of formal reverence (comp. Note on Luke x. 4) paid to those whom men delighted to honour.

**Rabbi, Rabbi.**—The title, which properly meant a "great" or "chief" one, as in Rab-Mag ("the chief priest," Jer. xxxix. 3), Rabsaris ("the chief eunuch," 2 Kings xviii. 17), had come to be applied, in the days of Hillel and Shammai, to the teachers or "masters" of the Law, and, as such, was given to the scribes who devoted themselves to that work. In Rabban (said to have been first given to Simeon, the son of Hillel) and Rabboni (John xx. 16) we have forms which were supposed to imply a yet greater degree of reverence.

(8) **Be not ye called Rabbi.**—The teaching of our Lord was not without its foreshadowings in that of the better scribes, and a precept of Shemaiah, the predecessor of Hillel, lays down the rule that "men should love the work, but hate the Rabbi-ship."

**One is your Master.**—The word, as found in the better MSS., is used in its old sense as "teacher." He was, as the disciples called Him, *the* Rabbi to whom they were to look for guidance. They were not to seek the title for themselves as a mark of honour. As they did their work as "teachers" (1 Cor. xii. 28; Eph. iv. 11), they were to remember Who was teaching them. The received text of the Greek gives the word which means "guide," as in verse 10.

and all ye are brethren. (9) And call no *man* your father upon the earth: for one is your Father,[a] which is in heaven. (10) Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ. (11) But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. (12) And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased;[b] and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

(13) But woe unto you,[c] scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in *yourselves*, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. (14) Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses,[d] and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. (15) Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to

[a] Mal. 1. 6.

[d] Mark 12. 40; Luke 20. 47.

[b] Luke 14. 11; and 18. 14.

[c] Luke 11. 52.

**Even Christ.**—The words are wanting in the best MSS., and have apparently crept into the text from a marginal explanatory note, completing the sense after the pattern of verse 10.

**All ye are brethren.**—The words would seem to come more naturally at the close of the next verse, and are so placed in some MSS. There is, however, a preponderance of authority in favour of this position, nor is the use of the name here without significance. The fact that men are disciples of the same Teacher constitutes in itself a bond of brotherhood.

(9) **Call no man your father.**—This also, under its Hebrew form of *Abba*, was one of the titles in which the scribes delighted. In its true use it embodied the thought that the relation of scholars and teachers was filial on the one side, paternal on the other; but precisely because it expressed so noble an idea was its merely conventional use full of danger. The history of the ecclesiastical titles of Christendom offers in this respect a singular parallel to that of the titles of Judaism. In Abbot (derived from Abba=Father), in Papa and Pope (which have risen from their application to every priest, till they culminate in the *Pontifex summus* of the Church of Rome), in our "Father in God," as applied to Bishops, we find examples of the use of like language, liable to the same abuse. It would, of course, be a slavish literalism to see in our Lord's words an absolute prohibition of these and like words in ecclesiastical or civil life. What was meant was to warn men against so recognising, in any case, the fatherhood of men as to forget the Fatherhood of God. Even the teacher and apostle, who is a father to others, needs to remember that he is as a "little child" in the relation to God. (Comp. St. Paul's claim in 1 Cor. iv. 15.)

(10) **Neither be ye called masters.**—The word is not the same as in verse 8, and signifies "guide," or "leader;" the "director" of conscience rather than the teacher. (Comp. Rom. ii. 19.)

(11) **He that is greatest among you.**—Literally, *the greater of you.* The words admit of a two-fold meaning. Either (1), as in Mark ix. 35, they assert a law of retribution—the man who seeks to be greatest shall be the servant of all; or (2) they point out the other law, of which our Lord's own life was the highest illustration—that he who is really greatest will show his greatness, not in asserting it, but in a life of ministration. The latter interpretation seems to give on the whole the best meaning.

(12) **Whosoever shall exalt himself.**—The precept seems to have been one which our Lord desired specially to imprint on the hearts of the disciples. It had been spoken at least twice before, as in Luke xiv. 11, xviii. 14. The echoes of it in Jas. iv. 10, 1 Pet. v. 6, show that the impression had been made.

(13) **Woe unto you.**—We enter in these verses on the sternest words of condemnation that ever came from our Lord's lips; but it may be questioned whether our English "Woe unto you" does not exclude too entirely the element of sorrow, as well as indignation, of which the Greek interjection (as in Mark xiii. 17) is at least capable. *Woe for you* is, perhaps, a better rendering.

**Hypocrites.**—See Note on chap. vi. 2.

**Ye shut up the kingdom . . .**—The words reproduce what had been said before as to "the key of knowledge" (Luke xi. 52), the symbol which was given to each scribe on his admission to his office. Our Lord's charge against them is that the only use they made of the key was to lock the door. They did not enter into the inner meaning of Law or Prophets; they excluded (with a possible reference to their putting out of the synagogue those who believed in Jesus, John ix. 22; xii. 42) those who were so entering into the higher life and the higher teaching of the Kingdom. (Comp. Gal. iv. 17.)

(14) **Ye devour widows' houses.**—The avarice thus described may have attained its end either (1) by using the advantages which they possessed, as the jurists and notaries of the time, to press unjust claims against wealthy widows, or to become their heirs, or (2) by leading devout women, under the show of piety, to bestow on them their estates or houses. To minister to the maintenance of a scribe was, they taught, the best use of wealth. The "long prayer" refers probably to the well-known Eighteen Prayers, which formed the standard of the Pharisee's devotion. The whole verse, it may be noted, is wanting in many MSS., and may have been inserted here from Mark xii. 40 or Luke xx. 47.

(15) **To make one proselyte.**—The zeal of the earlier Pharisees had showed itself in a propagandism which reminds us rather of the spread of the religion of Mahomet than of that of Christ. John Hyrcanus, the last of the Maccabean priest-rulers, had offered the Idumeans the alternative of death, exile, or circumcision (Jos. *Ant.* xiii. 9, § 3). When the government of Rome rendered such measures impossible, they resorted to all the arts of persuasion, and exulted when they succeeded in enrolling a heathen convert as a member of their party. But the proselytes thus made were too often a scandal and proverb of reproach. There was no real conversion, and those who were most active in the work of proselytising were, for the most part, blind leaders of the blind. The vices of the Jew were engrafted on the vices of the heathen. The ties of duty and natural affection were ruthlessly snapped asunder. The popular Jewish feeling about them was like that of the popular Christian feeling about a converted Jew. Proselytes were regarded as the leprosy

make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. (16) Woe unto you, *ye* blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! (17) *Ye* fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? (18) And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.[1] (19) *Ye* fools and blind: for whether *is* greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? (20) Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. (21) And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. (22) And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon. (23) Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin,[a] and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. (24) *Ye* blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. (25) Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter,[b] but within they are full of extortion and excess. (26) *Thou* blind Pharisee, cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. (27) Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all unclean-

[a] Luke 11. 42.

[b] Luke 11. 39.

[1] Or, *a debtor,* or, *bound.*

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of Israel, hindering the coming of the Messiah. It became a proverb that no one should trust a proselyte, even to the twenty-fourth generation. Our Lord was, in part at least, expressing the judgment of the better Jews when He taught that the proselyte thus made was "two-fold more the child of hell"—*i.e.*, of Gehenna—than his masters.

(16) **Whosoever shall swear by the temple.**—On the general teaching of the Pharisees as to oaths, see Notes on chap. v. 33—37. It is not easy to trace the currents of thought that run through a corrupt casuistry, but probably the line of reasoning that led to this distinction was that the "gold of the Temple"—not the gold used in its structural ornamentation, but that which in coin or bullion was part of the Corban, or sacred treasure (chap. xv. 5)—had received a more special consecration than the fabric, and involved, therefore, a higher obligation, when used as a *formula jurandi,* than the Temple or the altar. Something of the same feeling is seen in the popular casuistry which makes the binding force of an oath depend on "kissing the Book;" or that of mediæval Christendom, which saw in the relics of a saint that which was more sacred than the Gospels. The principle involved in our Lord's teaching goes further than its immediate application, and sweeps away the arbitrary distinction of different degrees of sanctity in the several parts of the same structure. Here the line of reasoning is, as in chap. v. 33—37, that the Temple includes the altar, that the altar includes the gift, that the heaven includes the Throne, and that thus every oath-formula runs up, explicitly or implicitly, into the great thought of God.

(23) **Ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin.**—The language of Deut. xii. 17 seems to recognise only corn, wine, and oil, among the produce of the earth, as subject to the law of tithes. The Pharisee, in his minute scrupulosity (based, it may be, on the more general language of Lev. xxvii. 30), made a point of gathering the tenth sprig of every garden herb, and presenting it to the priest. So far as this was done at the bidding of an imperfectly illumined conscience our Lord does not blame it. It was not, like the teaching as to oaths and the Corban, a direct perversion of the Law. What He did censure was the substitution of the lower for the higher. With the three examples of the "infinitely little" He contrasts the three ethical obligations that were infinitely great, "judgment, mercy, and faith." The word translated "mint" means literally the "sweet-smelling," the "fragrant."

(24) **Strain at a gnat.**—Better, as in Tyndale's and other earlier versions, *strain out.* It is sometimes said that the present rendering of the Authorised version is but the perpetuation of a printer's blunder; but of this there is scarcely sufficient evidence, nor is it probable in itself. In the Greek both nouns have the emphasis of the article, "*the* gnat—*the* camel." The scrupulous care described in the first clause of the proverbial saying was literally practised by devout Jews (as it is now by the Buddhists of Ceylon), in accordance with Lev. xi. 23, 42. In the second clause, the camel appears, not only, as in chap. xix. 24, as the type of vastness, but as being among the unclean beasts of which the Israelites might not eat (Lev. xi. 4).

(25) **The outside of the cup and of the platter.**—The latter word in the Greek indicates what we should call a "side-dish," as distinct from the "charger" of chap. xiv. 11. The "outside" includes the inner surface. (Comp., as regards the practice, Mark vii. 4.)

**Are full of extortion and excess.**—The two words point (1) to the source from which the viands and the wine came—the cup and the platter were filled with, or out of the proceeds of, extortion; (2) that to which they tended—they overflowed with unrestrained self-indulgence.

(26) **That the outside of them may be clean also.**—The implied premise is that "uncleanness" in its ethical sense was altogether distinct from the outward uncleanness with which the Pharisees identified it. If the contents of the cup were pure in their source and in their use, they made the outside "clean," irrespective of any process of surface purification.

(27) **Ye are like unto whited sepulchres.**—Contact with a sepulchre brought with it ceremonial uncleanness, and all burial-places were accordingly

ness. (28) Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. (29) Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, (30) and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. (31) Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. (32) Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. (33) *Ye* serpents, *ye* generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

(34) Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and *some* of them ye shall kill and crucify; and *some* of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and per-

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white-washed once a year, on the 15th day of the month Adar—*i.e.*, about the beginning of March—that passers-by might be warned by them, as they were of the approach of a leper by his cry, "Unclean, unclean!" (Lev. xiii. 45). The word translated "whited," means literally, "smeared with lime powder"—*i.e.*, "white-washed," in the modern technical sense of the word. It should be noticed that the similitude in Luke xi. 44 is drawn from the graves that were *not* whitened, or from which the whitewash had been worn away, and over which men passed without knowing of their contact with corruption. Some have thought, indeed, that this passage also refers to graves which had lost the coat of whitewash, and were "beautiful with grass and flowers." It seems hardly likely, however, that the perfect participle would be used to describe such a state of things, and it is more probable, looking to the date above given, that our Lord pointed to some tombs that were shining in their new whiteness.

(28) **Even so ye also . . .**—A like image meets us in the words in which one of the Maccabean princes, Alexander Jannæus, warned his wife on his death-bed to beware of "men who were *painted* Pharisees, expecting the reward of Phinehas, while their works were the works of Zimri."

**Iniquity.**—Better, *lawlessness*—a reckless disregard of the very Law of which they professed to be the interpreters.

(29) **Ye build the tombs . . .**—Four conspicuous monuments of this kind are seen to the present day at the base of the Mount of Olives, in the so-called Valley of Jehoshaphat, the architecture of which, with its mixture of debased Doric and Egyptian, leads archæologists to assign them to the period of the Herodian dynasty. These may, therefore, well have been the very sepulchres of which our Lord spoke, and to which, it may be, He pointed. They bear at present the names of Zechariah, Absalom, Jehoshaphat, and St. James; but there is no evidence that these were given to them when they were built, and the narratives of earlier travellers vary in reporting them. It may be noticed, however, that of these four names, Zechariah is the only one that belonged to a prophet, and the reference to the death of a martyr-prophet of that name in verse 35, makes it probable that the name may have been, as it were, suggested by the monument on which the Pharisees were lavishing their wealth and their skill at the very time when they were about to imbrue their hands in the blood of One who was, even in the judgment of many of their own class, both a "prophet" and a "righteous" man.

**Garnish.**—Better, *adorn*—as, *e.g.*, with columns, cornices, paintings, or bas-reliefs. Even these acts, natural and legitimate in themselves, were part of the "hypocrisy" or "unreality" of the Pharisees. They did not understand, and therefore could not rightly honour, the life of a prophet or just man. They might have learnt something from the saying of a teacher of their own in the Jerusalem Talmud, that "there is no need to adorn the sepulchres of the righteous, for their words are their monuments." In somewhat of the same strain wrote the Roman historian: "As the faces of men are frail and perishable, so are the works of art that represent their faces; but the form of their character is eternal, and this we can retain in memory, and set forth to others, not by external matter and skill of art, but by our own character and acts" (Tacitus, *Agricola*, c. 46).

(30) **If we had been in the days . . .**—There is no necessity for assuming that the Pharisees did not mean what they said. It was simply an instance of the unconscious hypocrisy of which every generation has more or less been guilty, when it has condemned the wrong-doing of the past—its bigotry, or luxury, or greed—and then has yielded to the same sins itself.

(31) **Ye be witnesses unto yourselves.**—Their words were true in another sense than that in which they had spoken them. They were reproducing in their deeds the very lineaments of those fathers whom they condemned.

(32) **Fill ye up then . . .**—The English fails to give the pathetic abruptness of the original: *And ye—fill ye up the measure of your fathers.* The thought implied is that which we find in Gen. xv. 16, and of which the history of the world offers but too many illustrations. Each generation, as it passes, adds something to the ever-accumulating mass of evil. At last the penalty falls, as though the long-suffering of God had been waiting till the appointed limit had been reached, and the measure of iniquity was at last full.

(33) **Ye generation of vipers.**—Better, as in iii. 7, *brood*, or *progeny of vipers.* The word of rebuke which had come before from the lips of the Baptist, comes now, with even more intense keenness, from those of the Christ.

**How can ye escape?**—Better—to maintain the parallelism with the Baptist's words, which was, we can hardly doubt, designed—*How should ye flee from?*

(34) **Behold, I send unto you prophets.**—In the parallel passage of Luke xi. 49 these words are introduced by the statement, "Therefore said the wisdom of God," which has led some to see in them a quotation from some prophetic writing then current (see Note there). The words are, in any case, remarkable as including "scribes" no less than "prophets" among the ministers of the New Covenant. (See Note on chap. xiii. 52.)

**Shall ye scourge in your synagogues.**—See Note on chap. x. 17.

secute *them* from city to city: (35) that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel[a] unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. (36) Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. (37) O Jerusalem,[b] Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee,[c] how often would I have gathered thy children together,[d] even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not! (38) Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. (39) For I say unto

b Luke 13. 34.
c 2 Chron. 24. 21.
a Gen. 4. 8.
d 2 Esdras 1. 30.

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(35) **The blood of Zacharias son of Barachias.**—A very memorable martyrdom is recorded in 2 Chron. xxiv. 20—22, in which a prophet, named Zechariah, was stoned "in the court of the house of the Lord, at the commandment of the king." That Zacharias was, however, the son of Jehoiada; and the only "Zechariah the son of Barachias" in the Old Testament, is the minor prophet whose writings occupy the last place but one among the prophetic books of the Old Testament. Of his death we know nothing, and it is not probable, had he been slain in the manner here described, that it would have passed unrecorded. The death of the son of Jehoiada, on the other hand, is not only recorded, as above in 2 Chron. xxiv., but had become the subject of popular legends. The blood of the prophet, it was said in the Talmud, would not dry up. It was still bubbling up when Nebuzaradan, the Chaldean commander (Jer. xxxix. 9) took the Temple. No sacrifices availed to stay it, not even the blood of thousands of slaughtered priests. Wild as the story is, it shows, as does the so-called tomb of Zacharias, the impression which that death had made on the minds of men, and explains why it was chosen by our Lord as a representative example. The substitution of Barachias for Jehoiada may be accounted for as the mistake of a transcriber, led by the association of the two names, like that of Jeremy for Zechariah in chap. xxvii. 9 (where see Note). In the Sinaitic MS. the words "son of Barachiah" are omitted, but this betrays the hand of a corrector cutting the knot of the difficulty. The assumptions (1) that Jehoiada may have borne Barachiah as a second name, (2) or that he may have had a son of that name, and been really the grandfather of the martyr, are obviously hypotheses invented for the occasion, without a shadow of evidence. Singularly enough, Josephus (*Wars*, iv. 5, § 4) recounts the murder of a "Zecharias, the son of Baruch," *i.e.*, Barachiah, as perpetrated in the Temple by the Zealots just before the destruction of Jerusalem. It is possible that this also may not have been without its weight in so linking the two names together in men's minds as to mislead the memory as to the parentage of the older prophet. The list of conjectures is not complete unless we add that one of the Apocryphal Gospels (*The Protevangelion of James*, chap. xvi.) records the death of Zacharias, the father of the Baptist, as slain by Herod in the Temple, and near the altar, and that some have supposed that he was the son of Barachias referred to.

**Between the temple and the altar**—*i.e.*, between the *sanctuary* (the word is the same as in chap. xxvi. 61; John ii. 19)—the Holy of Holies—and the altar of burnt offerings that stood outside it.

(36) **All these things shall come upon this generation.**—The words carry on the thought of the measure that is gradually being filled up. Men make the guilt of past ages their own, reproduce its atrocities, identify themselves with it; and so, what seems at first an arbitrary decree, visiting on the children the sins of the fathers, becomes in such cases a righteous judgment. If they repent, they cut off the terrible entail of sin and punishment; but if they harden themselves in their evil, they inherit the delayed punishment of their father's sins as well as of their own.

(37) **Jerusalem, Jerusalem.**—The lamentation had been uttered once before (Luke xiii. 34, 35), and must, we may believe, have been present to our Lord's mind when He "beheld the city and wept over it" (Luke xix. 41), as He halted on the brow of Olivet.

It should be noted that the Hebrew form of Jerusalem (Ἱερουσαλήμ instead of Ἱεροσόλυμα) occurs here only in St. Matthew, as though the very syllables had impressed themselves on the minds of men.

**Thou that killest the prophets.**—The words are in the present tense, as embracing the past and even the future. As with a sad prescience our Lord speaks of the sufferings which were in store for His messengers, and of which the deaths of Stephen (Acts vii. 60) and of James (Acts xii. 2) were representative instances. That the persecution in each case took a wider range, was in the nature of the case inevitable. It is distinctly stated, indeed, that it did so in both instances (Acts viii. 1, xii. 1), and is implied in 1 Thess. ii. 14, 15, where the "prophets" who suffered are clearly Christian prophets, and probably in Jas. v. 10.

**Even as a hen gathereth her chickens.**—The words reproduce (if we follow the English version), under an image of singular tenderness, the similitude of Deut. xxxii. 11, the care of the hen for her chickens taking the place of that of the eagle for her nestlings. Possibly, however, the contrast between the two images lies in the English rather than the Greek, where we have the generic term, "as a bird gathereth her brood." The words "how often" may be noted as implying (though they occur in the Gospels that confine themselves to our Lord's Galilean ministry) a yearning pity for Jerusalem, such as we naturally associate with the thought of His ministry in that city.

**Ye would not.**—No words could more emphatically state man's fatal gift of freedom, as shown in the power of his will to frustrate the love and pity, and therefore the will, even of the Almighty.

(38) **Your house.**—The word "desolate" is omitted in some of the best MSS. The words "your house" may refer either generally to the whole polity of Israel, or more specifically to the "house" in which they gloried, the Temple, which was the joy of their hearts. It had been the house of God, but He, as represented by His Son, was now leaving it for ever. It was *their* house now, not His. We must remember that the words were spoken as our Lord was "departing from the Temple" (xxiv. 1), never to reappear there.

(39) **Till ye shall say.**—There is obviously a reference to the fact that the words quoted from Ps. cxviii. 26, had been uttered by the crowd but a few days before on His solemn entry into Jerusalem. Not till those words should be uttered once again—not

you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

CHAPTER XXIV.—(1) And Jesus went out,[a] and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to *him* for to shew him the buildings of the temple. (2) And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another,[b] that shall not be thrown down.

(3) And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? (4) And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. (5) For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. (6) And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the

A.D. 33.

[a] Mark 13. 1; Luke 21. 5.

[b] Luke 19. 44.

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in a momentary burst of excitement, not with feigned Hosannas, but in spirit and in truth—would they look on Him as they looked now. There can be little doubt that our Lord points to the second Advent, and to the welcome that will then be given Him by all the true Israel of God. For that generation, and for the outward Israel as such, the abandonment was final.

### XXIV.

(1) **And Jesus went out.**—Better, following the best MSS., *Jesus departed from the Temple, and was going on His way, when His disciples.* St. Mark and St. Luke report the touching incident of the widow's mite as connected with our Lord's departure.

**His disciples came to him.**—We may well think of their action as following on the words they had just heard. Was that house, with all its goodly buildings and great stones, its golden and its "beautiful" gates (Acts iii. 2)—through which they had probably passed—its porticos, its marble cupolas, the structural and ornamental offerings which had accumulated during the forty-six years that had passed since Herod had begun his work of improvement (John ii. 20), to be left "desolate"? Would not the sight of its glories lead Him to recall those words of evil omen? This seems a far more natural explanation than that which sees in what they were doing only the natural wonder of Galilean peasants at the splendour of the Holy City. They had seen it too often, we may add, to feel much wonder.

(2) **There shall not be left here one stone upon another.**—So Josephus relates that Titus ordered the whole city and the Temple to be dug up, leaving only two or three of the chief towers, so that those who visited it could hardly believe that it had ever been inhabited (*Wars*, vii. 1). The remains which recent explorations have disinterred belong, all of them, to the substructures of the Temple—its drains, foundations, underground passages, and the like. The words fell on the ears of the disciples, and awed them into silence. It was not till they had crossed the Mount of Olives that even the foremost and most favoured ventured to break it.

(3) **The disciples came unto him privately.**—From St. Mark we learn their names—"Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew;" *i.e.*, the four in the first of the three groups that made up the Twelve. The position of Andrew as the last is noticeable, as connected with the general pre-eminence of the first three.

**The sign of thy coming.**—Literally, *of Thy presence.* The passage is memorable as the first occurrence of the word (παρουσία, *parousia*), which was so prominent in the teaching of the Epistles (1 Thess. ii. 19; iii. 13; Jas. v. 7; 1 John ii. 28, *et al.*). They had brought themselves to accept the thought of His departure and return, though time and manner were as yet hidden from them.

**The end of the world.**—Literally, *the end of the age.* In the common language of the day, which had passed from the schools of the Rabbis into popular use, "this age," or "this world," meant the time up to the coming of the Messiah; the "age or world to come" (chap. xiii. 40; xix. 28; Heb. ii. 5; vi. 5), the glorious time which He was to inaugurate. The disciples had heard their Lord speak in parables of such a coming, and they naturally connected it in their thoughts with the close of the age or period in which they lived.

(4) **Jesus answered and said unto them . . .**—The great discourse which follows is given with substantial agreement by St. Mark and St. Luke, the variations being such as were naturally incident to reports made from memory, and probably after an interval of many years. In all probability, the written record came, in the first instance, from the lips of St. Peter, and it will accordingly be instructive to compare its eschatology, or "teaching as to the last things," with that which we find in his discourses and epistles. St. Paul's reference to "the day of the Lord "coming" as a thief in the night" (1 Thess. v. 2) suggests the inference that its substance had become known at a comparatively early date; but it was probably not published, *i.e.*, not thrown as a document into circulation, among Christian Jews, till the time was near when its warnings would be needed; and this may, in part, account for the variations with which it then appeared.

(5) **Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ.**—Better, *the Christ.* No direct fulfilments of this prediction are recorded, either in the New Testament, or by Josephus, or other historians. Bar-Cochba (the "son of the star"), who claimed to be the "Star" of the prophecy of Balaam (Num. xxiv. 17), is often named as a fulfilment; but he did not appear till A.D. 120—nearly 50 years *after* the destruction of Jerusalem. In the excited fanaticism of the time, however, it was likely enough that such pretenders should arise and disappear, after each had lived out his little day, and fill no place in history. The "many antichrists, *i.e.*, rival Christs, of 1 John ii. 18, may point to such phenomena; possibly, also, the prophecy of 2 Thess. ii. 4. Theudas (the last rebel of that name—not the one named in Acts. v. 36, but by Josephus, *Ant.* xx. 5), or "the Egyptian" of Acts xxi. 38, may possibly have mingled Messianic claims with their pretensions, but there is no evidence of it.

(6) **Ye shall hear . . .**—Literally, *ye shall be about to hear*—a kind of double future, or possibly an

end is not yet. (7) For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. (8) All these *are* the beginning of sorrows. (9) Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted,[a] and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. (10) And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. (11) And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. (12) And because iniquity shall abound, the love

[a] ch. 10. 17; Luke 21. 12; John 16. 2.

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example of the transition between the older future tense and the use of an auxiliary verb.

**Wars and rumours.**—St. Luke adds "commotions." The forty years that intervened before the destruction of Jerusalem were full of these in all directions; but we may probably think of the words as referring specially to wars, actual or threatened, that affected the Jews, such, *e.g.*, as those of which we read under Caligula, Claudius, and Nero (Jos. *Ant.* xx. 1, 6). The title which the historian gave to his second book, "The Wars of the Jews," is sufficiently suggestive. As the years passed on, the watchword, "Be not troubled," must have kept the believers in Christ calm in the midst of agitation. They were not to think that the end was to follow at once upon the wars which were preparing the way for it.

(7) **Nation shall rise against nation.**—Some of the more memorable of these are recorded by Josephus: one at Seleucia, in which 50,000 Jews are said to have perished (*Ant.* xviii. 9, §§ 8, 9); others at Cæsarea, Scythopolis, Joppa, Ascalon, and Tyre (*Wars* ii. 18); and the memorable conflict between Jews and Greeks at Alexandria, under Caligula, A.D. 38, of which we learn from Philo. The whole period was, indeed, marked by tumults of this kind.

**Famines.**—Of these we know that of which Agabus prophesied (Acts xi. 28), and which was felt severely, in the ninth year of Claudius, not only in Syria, but in Rome (Jos. *Ant.* xx. 2). Suetonius (*Claud.* c. 18) speaks of the reign of that emperor as marked by "continual scarcity."

**Pestilences.**—The word is not found in the best MSS., and has probably been inserted from the parallel passage in Luke xxi. 11. It was, however, the inevitable attendant on famine, and the Greek words for the two (λιμὸς and λοιμὸς, *limos* and *loimos*) were so like each other that the omission may possibly have been an error of transcription. A pestilence is recorded as sweeping off 30,000 persons at Rome (Sueton. *Nero*, 39; Tacitus, *Ann.* xvi. 13).

**Earthquakes, in divers places.**—Perhaps no period in the world's history has ever been so marked by these convulsions as that which intervenes between the Crucifixion and the destruction of Jerusalem. Josephus records one in Judæa (*Wars*, iv. 4, § 5); Tacitus tells of them in Crete, Rome, Apamea, Phrygia, Campania (*Ann.* xii. 58; xiv. 27; xv. 22); Seneca (*Ep.* 91), in A.D. 58, speaks of them as extending their devastations over Asia (the proconsular province, not the continent), Achaia, Syria, and Macedonia.

(8) **The beginning of sorrows.**—The words mean strictly, *the beginning of travail pangs.* The troubles through which the world passes are thought of as issuing in a "new birth"—the "regeneration" of chap. xix. 28. So St. Paul speaks of the whole creation as "travailing in pain together" (Rom. viii. 22). So a time of national suffering and perplexity is one in which "the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth" (Isa. xxxvii. 3).

(9) **Then shall they deliver . . .**—The adverb, here and in verse 10, points to synchronism rather than sequence in its connection with verse 8.

**To be afflicted.**—Literally, *unto affliction.* The words repeat in substance the predictions of chap. x. 22. (See Notes there.) Here we have "hated of all the nations," *i.e.*, heathen nations, instead of the wider "hated of all men." So, when Paul reached Rome, the "sect" of the Christians was "everywhere spoken against" (Acts xxviii. 22) "as evildoers" (1 Pet. ii. 12). So, a little later on, Tacitus describes them as "hated for their crimes" (*Ann.* xv. 44).

(10) **Shall many be offended.**—The words point primarily to those who were believers in Christ, and found a stumbling-block either in the new aspects of truth from time to time presented, or in the slowness of its victory, or in the delayed coming of the Lord. (Comp. 2 Pet. iii. 4.)

**Shall hate one another.**—The words received a terrible fulfilment in the faction-fights of the Zealots and Sicarii at Jerusalem (Jos. *Wars*, iv. 3), in the disputes in every city between believing and unbelieving Jews (Acts xiii. 50; xiv. 19; xvii. 5; xviii. 6; xix. 9), in the bitter hatred of the Judaisers against St. Paul (Acts xxiii. 12).

(11) **Many false prophets shall rise.**—The later writings of the New Testament bear repeated testimony to this feature of the ten years that preceded the destruction of Jerusalem. St. John speaks of false prophets (1 John iv. 1), and many antichrists (1 John ii. 18); St. Peter of "false teachers" (2 Pet. ii. 1), like the false prophets of old; St. Paul of men who should give heed to seducing spirits (1 Tim. iv. 1). These show the extent of the evil which was the natural outcome of the feverish excitement of the people. In Josephus (*Wars*, vi. 5, § 2) we have the record of this working of false prophecy in more immediate connection with Judæa and Jerusalem. Up to the last moment of the capture of the city by Titus, men were buoyed up with false hopes of deliverance, based on the predictions of fanatics and impostors.

(12) **Because iniquity shall abound . . .**—Better, *lawlessness.* No word could more fitly represent the condition of Judæa in the time just referred to: brigandage, massacres, extortion, assassination, came to be common things.

**The love of many . . .**—Better, *of the many*; the greater part of the true Israel who would be found in the Church of Christ; perhaps, also, the greater part of the nation as such. This was the natural result of the condition of things implied in the "lawlessness." The tendency of all such times, as seen in the histories of famines, and pestilences, and revolutions, is to intensify selfishness, both in the more excusable form of self-preservation, and in the darker form of self-aggrandisement. In the tendency to "forsake the assembling of themselves together" among the Hebrew Christians, we have, perhaps, one instance of the love waxing cold (Heb. x. 25).

of many shall wax cold. (13) But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. (14) And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. (15) When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation,[a] spoken of by Daniel the prophet,[b] stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) (16) then let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains: (17) let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house: (18) neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. (19) And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give

[a] Mark 13. 14.

[b] Dan. 9. 27.

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(13) **He that shall endure unto the end . . .**—The words have at once a higher and lower sense. Endurance to the end of life is in every case the condition of salvation, in the full meaning of the word. But the context rather leads us to see in the "end" the close of the period of which our Lord speaks, *i.e.*, the destruction of Jerusalem; and so the words "shall be saved" at least include deliverance from the doom of those who were involved in that destruction.

(14) **Shall be preached in all the world.**—The words must not be strained beyond the meaning which they would have for those who heard them, and they were certain to see in "all the world" (literally, *the inhabited earth*, as in Luke ii. 1; Acts xi. 28) neither more nor less than the Roman empire; and it was true, as a matter of fact, that there was hardly a province of the empire in which the faith of Christ had not been preached before the destruction of Jerusalem. Special attention should be given to the words, "a witness unto all the *nations*," *i.e.*, to all the Gentiles, as an implicit sanction of the work of which St. Paul was afterwards the great representative. So taken, the words prepare the way for the great mission of chap. xxviii. 19.

(15) **The abomination of desolation.**—The words, as they stand in Dan. xii. 11, seem to refer to the desecration of the sanctuary by the mad attempt of Antiochus Epiphanes to stop the "daily sacrifice," and to substitute an idolatrous worship in its place (2 Macc. vi. 1—9). What analogous desecration our Lord's words point to, is a question that has received very different answers. We may at once narrow the range of choice by remembering (1) that it is before the destruction of the Temple, and therefore cannot be the presence of the plundering troops, or of the eagles of the legions in it; (2) that the "abomination" stands in the "Holy Place," and therefore it cannot be identified with the appearance of the Roman eagles in the lines of the besieging legions under Cestius, A.D. 68. The answer is probably to be found in the faction-fights, the murders and outrages, the profane consecration of usurping priests, which the Jewish historian describes so fully (Jos. *Wars*, iv. 6, §§ 6—8). The Zealots had got possession of the Temple at an early stage in the siege, and profaned it by these and other like outrages; they made the Holy Place (in the very words of the historian) "a garrison and stronghold" of their tyrannous and lawless rule; while the better priests looked on from afar and wept tears of horror. The mysterious prediction of 2 Thess. ii. 4 may point, in the first instance, to some kindred "abomination."

The words "spoken of by Daniel the prophet" have been urged as absolutely decisive of the questions that have been raised as to the authorship of the book that bears the name of that prophet. This is not the place to discuss those questions, but it is well in all cases not to put upon words a strain which they will scarcely bear. It has been urged, with some degree of reasonableness, that a reference of this kind was necessarily made to the book as commonly received and known, and that critical questions of this kind, as in reference to David as the writer of the Psalms, or Moses as the author of the books commonly ascribed to him, lay altogether outside the scope of our Lord's teaching. The questions themselves had not been then raised, and were not present to the thoughts either of the hearers or the readers of his prophetic warnings.

**Whoso readeth, let him understand.**—The words have been supposed by some commentators to have been a marginal note in the first written report of the discourse, calling attention to this special prediction on account of its practical bearing on the action of the disciples of Christ at the time. There appears, however, to be no sufficient reason why they should not be received as part of the discourse itself, bidding one who read the words of Daniel to ponder over their meaning till he learnt to recognise their fulfilment in the events that should pass before his eyes.

(16) **Then let them which be in Judæa.**—The words were acted on when the time came. Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* iii. 5) records that the Christians of Judæa, acting "on a certain oracle," fled, in A.D. 68, to Pella, a town on the northern boundary of Peræa. So Josephus (*Wars*, iv. 9, § 1; v. 10, § 1) more generally relates that many of the more conspicuous citizens fled from the city, as men abandon a sinking ship. The "mountains" may be named generally as a place of refuge, or may point, as interpreted by the event, to the Gilead range of hills on the east of Jordan.

(17) **Let him which is on the housetop.**—The houses in the streets of Jerusalem were built in a continuous line, and with flat roofs, so that a man might pass from house to house without descending into the street until he came to some point near the wall or gate of the city, and so make his escape. At a moment of danger (in this case that arising from the factions within the city, rather than the invaders without), any delay might prove fatal. Men were to escape as though their life were "given them for a prey" (Jer. xlv. 5), without thinking of their goods or chattels.

(18) **To take his clothes.**—Better, in the singular, *his cloak*. The man would be working in the field with the short tunic of the labouring peasant, leaving the flowing outer garment at home in the city. Here also the flight was to be rapid and immediate.

(19) **Woe unto them.**—Better, *alas for them*, or *woe for them*. The tone is that of pity rather than denunciation. The hardships of a hurried flight would press most heavily on those who were encumbered with infant children, or were expecting childbirth. The same tenderness of sympathy shows itself in the words spoken to the daughters of Jerusalem in Luke xxiii. 28, 29. Perhaps the words point to the darker horrors of the siege, when mothers were driven, in the frenzy of starvation, to feed on their infants' flesh (Jos. *Wars*, vi. 3, § 4).

suck in those days! (20) But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: (21) for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. (22) And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. (23) Then if any man shall say unto you,[a] Lo, here *is* Christ, or there; believe *it* not. (24) For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect. (25) Behold, I have told you before. (26) Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers; believe *it* not. (27) For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. (28) For wheresoever the carcase is,[b] there will the eagles be gathered together.

[a] Mark 13. 21; Luke 17. 23.
[b] Luke 17. 37.

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(20) **Pray ye that your flight . . .**—Rules were given for flight where the conditions lay within their own power. Other incidents which lay outside their will might lawfully be the subjects of their prayers. It is characteristic of St. Matthew, as writing for Jews, that he alone records the words "nor on the Sabbath day." Living as the Christians of Judæa did in the strict observance of the Law, they would either be hindered by their own scruples from going beyond a Sabbath day's journey (about one English mile), which would be insufficient to place them out of the reach of danger, or would find impediments—gates shut, and the like—from the Sabbath observance of others.

(21) **Such as was not since the beginning . .**—The words come from Dan. xii. 1. One who reads the narrative of Josephus will hardly hesitate to adopt his language, "that all miseries that had been known from the beginning of the world fell short" of those of the siege of the Holy City (*Wars*, v. 13, §§ 4, 5). Other sieges may have witnessed, before and since, scenes of physical wretchedness equally appalling, but nothing that history records offers anything parallel to the alternations of fanatic hope and frenzied despair that attended the breaking up of the faith and polity of Israel.

(22) **Should no flesh be saved.**—The words are of course limited by the context to the scene of the events to which the prophecy refers. The warfare with foes outside the city, and the faction-fights and massacres within, would have caused an utter depopulation of the whole country.

**For the elect's sake.**—Those who, as believers in Jesus, were the "remnant" of the visible Israel, and therefore the true Israel of God. It was for the sake of the Christians of Judæa, not for that of the rebellious Jews, that the war was not protracted, and that Titus, under the outward influences of Josephus and Bernice, tempered his conquests with compassion (*Ant.* xii. 3, § 2; *Wars*, vi. 9, § 2). The new prominence which the idea of an election gains in our Lord's later teaching is every way remarkable. (Comp. chaps. xviii. 7; xx. 6). The "call" had been wide; in those who received and obeyed it He taught men to recognise the "elect" whom God had chosen. Subtle questions as to whether the choice rested on foreknowledge or was absolutely arbitrary lay, if we may reverently so speak, outside the scope of His teaching.

(23) **Lo, here is Christ, or there.**—Better, *Lo, here is the Christ.* The narrative of Josephus, while speaking of many "deceivers" claiming divine authority (*Wars*, ii. 13, § 4), is silent as to any pretenders to the character of the Messiah. It is scarcely conceivable, however, that this should not have been one of the results of the fevered dreams of the people, and the reticence of the historian was probably a *suppressio veri* connected with his own recognition of Vespasian as a *quasi* Christ (*Wars*, vi. 5, § 4).

(24) **Shall shew great signs and wonders.**—Simon Magus (Acts viii. 9—11) and Elymas (Acts xiii. 6) may be taken as representative instances of these false claimants to supernatural powers. So "signs and lying wonders" are the notes of the coming of the Wicked One, in whom the mystery of iniquity shall receive its full development (2 Thess. ii. 9). But for the warning thus given, even the "elect"—*i.e.*, the Christians of Judæa and Jerusalem—might have been carried away by the current of popular delusions.

(26) **In the secret chambers.**—The word is the same as that translated "closet" in chap. vi. 6. What is meant is that the pretenders will in some way or other shun the publicity which would test their claims. There would be whispered rumours that the Christ was concealing Himself in the wilderness beyond the Jordan, or in the inner recesses of some zealot's house, and would at the last moment appear to claim the throne of His father David. (Comp. Jos. *Wars*, vi. 5, § 2). Believers in Christ would hear such words with a calm indifference, for they would know that such was not to be the manner of His approach.

(27) **As the lightning cometh out of the east.**—In this and the three preceding verses we are, as it were, on the dim border-land of the primary and the ultimate fulfilments of the words. The disciples in their questions (verse 3) had connected the destruction of Jerusalem with the "coming" of their Lord, and the two are connected even in His own words and thoughts. In whatever way He came, whether in the final destruction of the Temple and polity of Israel, or at the end of the world's great drama, the advent would be sudden and unlooked-for as the lightning-flash. The crises of the world's history, which are the "springing and germinant accomplishments" of such words as these, are always unexpected by the great mass of mankind, even though the few whose eyes are opened can discern the signs of the times, and know that their "redemption draweth nigh."

(28) **Wheresoever the carcase is.**—Two interpretations of this verse may, without much risk of error, be at once rejected:—(1) That which sees in the "eagles" the well-known symbols of the strength of the Roman legions, and in the "carcass" the decayed and corrupted Judaism which those legions came to destroy. This, true as far as it goes, is too narrow and localised in its range for so wide and far-reaching a comparison. (2) The strange fantastic imagination of many of the Fathers that the "carcass" is Christ Himself, as crucified and

(29) Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened,[a] and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: (30) and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven

[a] Isa. 13. 10; Ezek. 32. 7; Joel 2. 31; Mark 13. 24; Luke 21. 25.

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slain, and that the eagles are His true saints and servants who hasten to meet Him in His coming. Those who picture to themselves with what purpose and with what results the vultures of the East swoop down on the carrion which they scent far off upon the breeze, will surely find such an explanation at once revolting and irrational. What the enigmatic proverb (if indeed it be enigmatic) means, is that wherever life is gone, wherever a church or nation is decaying and putrescent, there to the end of time will God's ministers of vengeance, the vultures that do their work of destruction, and so leave room for new forms of life by sweeping off that which was "ready to vanish away" (comp. Heb. viii. 13 for the phrase and thought), assuredly be found. What the disciples should witness in the fall of Jerusalem would repeat itself scores of times in the world's history, and be fulfilled on the largest scale at the end of all things. The words of Isaiah (xlvi. 11) and Ezekiel (xxxix. 4), in which the "ravenous bird" is a symbol of the nations who do the work of destruction to which God sends them, illustrate the meaning of the generalised law which is here asserted.

(29) **Immediately after the tribulation of those days.**—From this point onwards the prophecy takes a wider range, and passes beyond the narrow limits of the destruction of Jerusalem to the final coming of the Son of Man, and the one is represented as following "immediately" on the other. No other meaning could have been found in the words when they were first heard or read. The "days" of this verse are those which were shortened "for the elect's sake" (verse 22). The "tribulation" can be none other than that of verse 21, which was emphatically connected with the flight of men from the beleaguered city. The language of St. Mark, "in those days, after that tribulation," followed by a description of the second Advent identical in substance with St. Matthew's, brings the two events, if possible, into yet closer juxtaposition. How are we to explain the fact that already more than eighteen centuries have rolled away, and "the promise of His coming" still tarries? It is a partial answer to the question to say that God's measurements of time are not as man's, and that with Him "a thousand years are as one day" (2 Pet. iii. 8); that there is that in God which answers to the modification of a purpose in man, and now postpones, now hastens, the unfolding of His plan. But that which may seem the boldest answer is also (in the judgment of the present writer) that which seems the truest and most reverential. Of that "day and hour" knew no man, "not even the Son" (Mark xiii. 32), "but the Father only" (verse 36); and therefore He, as truly man, and as having, therefore, vouchsafed to accept the limitations of knowledge incident to man's nature, speaks of the two events as poets and prophets speak of the far-off future. As men gazing from a distance see the glittering heights of two snow-crowned mountains apparently in close proximity, and take no account of the vast tract, it may be of very many miles, which lies between them; so it was that those whose thoughts must have been mainly moulded on this prediction, the Apostles and their immediate disciples, though they were too conscious of their ignorance of "the times and the seasons" to fix the day or year, lived and died in the expectation that it was not far off, and that they might, by prayer and acts, hasten its coming (2 Pet. iii. 12). (See Note on verse 36.)

**Shall the sun be darkened.**—The words reproduce the imagery in which Isaiah had described the day of the Lord's judgment upon Babylon (Isa. xiii. 10), and may naturally receive the same symbolic interpretation. Our Lord speaks here in language as essentially apocalyptic as that of the Revelation of St. John (Rev. viii. 12), and it lies in the very nature of such language that it precludes a literal interpretation. Even the common speech of men describes a time of tribulation as one in which "the skies are dark" and "the sun of a nation's glory sets in gloom;" and the language of Isaiah, of St. John, and of our Lord, is but the expansion of that familiar parable. Sun, moon, and stars *may* represent, as many have thought, kingly power, and the spiritual influence of which the Church of Christ is the embodiment, and the illuminating power of those who "shine as lights in the world" (Phil. ii. 15), but even this interpretation is, it may be, over-precise and technical, and the words are better left in their dim and terrible vagueness.

**The powers of the heavens.**—These are, it will be noted, distinguished from the "stars," and may be taken as the apocalyptic expression for the laws or "forces" by which moon and stars are kept in their appointed courses. The phrase is found elsewhere only in the parallel passages in St. Mark and St. Luke.

(30) **Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man.**—Can we picture to ourselves what this sign shall be? Is it distinct from the coming of the Son of Man which here is so closely united with it? Men have given wildly conjectural answers to these questions, and have dreamt of the cross as appearing in the sky (as if the vision of Constantine were to be reproduced in the last days), or the lightning flash that shall dazzle all men with its brightness, or of some visible manifestation which none can imagine till it shall come. The vision of Dan. vii. 13 supplies, it is believed, the true answer. The sign of the Son of Man is none other than the presence of the Son of Man Himself, coming in the clouds of heaven, in the ineffable glory of His majesty. And here, too, we must remember that we are still in the region of apocalyptic symbols. All such imagery falls short of the ultimate reality, and a "sign in heaven" is something more than a visible appearance in the sky.

**Then shall all the tribes of the earth.**—It lies in the nature of the case, that the "tribes" are those who have done evil, and who therefore dread the coming of the Judge. The words find their best comment in Rev. i. 7, where St. John combines them freely with the prediction of Zech. xii. 10, "They also which pierced Him," obviously including not only those who were sharers in the actual "piercing" of the crucified body of the Lord Jesus (John xix. 37), but all who in any age "crucify the Son of God afresh" (Heb. vi. 6).

with power and great glory.[a] (31) And[b] he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet,[1] and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. (32) Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer *is* nigh: (33) so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, *even* at the doors. (34) Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. (35) Heaven and earth shall pass away,[c] but my words shall not pass away.

(36) But of that day and hour knoweth

[a] Rev. 1. 7.
[b] 1 Cor. 15. 52; 1 Thess. 4. 16.
[1] Or, *with a trumpet, and a great voice.*
[c] Mark 13. 31.

(31) **He shall send his angels.**—The words are memorable as the formal expansion of what had been, as it were, hinted before in the parables of the Tares (xiii. 41) and the Net (xiii. 49).

**With a great sound of a trumpet.**—The better MSS. omit "sound:" *With a great trumpet.* We know not, and cannot know, what reality will answer to this symbol, but it is interesting to note how deeply it impressed itself on the minds not only of the disciples who heard it, but of those who learnt it from them. When St. Paul speaks of the "trumpet" that shall "sound" (1 Cor. xv. 52), of "the voice of the archangel and the trump of God" (1 Thess. iv. 16), we feel that he was reproducing what had been thus proclaimed, and that his eschatology, or doctrine of the last things, was based on a knowledge of, at least, the substance of the great prophetic discourse recorded in the Gospels.

**They shall gather together his elect.**—The "elect" are the same in idea, though not necessarily the same individuals, as those for whom the days were to be shortened in verse 22; and the work of the angels is that of gathering them, wherever they may be scattered, into the one fold. As with so many of the pregnant germs of thought in this chapter, the work of the angels is expanded by the visions of the Apocalypse, when the seer beheld the angels come and seal the hundred and forty-four thousand in their foreheads before the work of judgment should begin (Rev. vii. 2). In each case the elect are those who are living on the earth at the time of the second Advent. In these chapters there is, indeed, no distinct mention of the resurrection of the dead, though they, as well as the living, are implied in the parable of judgment with which the discourse ends.

(32) **Now learn a parable of the fig tree.**—As in so many other instances (comp. Notes on John viii. 12; x. 1), we may think of the words as illustrated by a living example. Both time and place make this probable. It was on the Mount of Olives, where then, as now, fig-trees were found as well as olives (chap. xxi. 19), and the season was that of early spring, when "the flowers appear on the earth" and the "fig-tree putteth forth her green figs" (Song Sol. ii. 11—13). And what our Lord teaches is that as surely as the fresh green foliage of the fig-tree is a sign of summer, so shall the signs of which He speaks portend the coming of the Son of Man.

(33) **So likewise ye.**—The pronoun is emphatic. Ye whom I have chosen, who are therefore among the elect that shall be thus gathered. The words are spoken to the four Apostles as the representatives of the whole body of believers who should be living—first, at the destruction of Jerusalem, and afterwards at the end of the world. Of the four, St. John alone, so far as we know, survived the destruction of Jerusalem.

**That it is near.**—Better, *that He is near*, in accordance with Jas. v. 9.

(34) **This generation shall not pass . . .**—The natural meaning of the words is, beyond question, that which takes "generation" in the ordinary sense (as in chap. i. 17, Acts xiii. 36, and elsewhere) for those who are living at any given period. So it was on "this generation" (chap. xxiii. 36) that the accumulated judgments were to fall. The desire to bring the words into more apparent harmony with history has led some interpreters to take "generation" in the sense of "race" or "people," and so to see in the words a prophecy of the perpetuity of the existence of the Jews as a distinct people till the end of the world. But for this meaning there is not the shadow of authority; nor does it remove the difficulty which it was invented to explain. The words of chap. xvi. 28 state the same fact in language which does not admit of any such explanation.

**Till all these things be fulfilled.**—Better, *till all these things come to pass.* The words do not necessarily imply more than the commencement of a process, the first unrolling of the scroll of the coming ages.

(35) **Heaven and earth.**—The tone is that of One who speaks with supreme authority, foreseeing, on the one hand, death and seeming failure, but on the other, the ultimate victory, not of truth only in the abstract, but of His own word as the truth. The parallelism of the words with those of Ps. cii. 26, Isa. xl. 8, gives them their full significance. The Son of Man claims for His own words the eternity which belongs to the words of Jehovah. (Comp. 1 Pet. i. 24, 25.) The whole history of Christendom witnesses to the fulfilment of the prophetic claim. Amid all its changes and confusions, its errors and its sins, the words of Christ have not passed away, but retain their pre-eminence as the last and fullest revelation of the Father.

(36) **No, not the angels of heaven.**—St. Mark's addition (xiii. 32), "neither the Son"—or better, *not even the Son*—is every way remarkable. Assuming, what is well-nigh certain (see *Introduction to St. Mark*), the close connection of that Gospel with St. Peter, it is as if the Apostle who heard the discourse desired, for some special reason, to place on record the *ipsissima verba* of his Master. And that reason may be found in his own teaching. The over-eager expectations of some, and the inevitable reaction of doubt and scorn in others, both rested on their assumption that the Son of Man had definitely fixed the time of His appearing, and on their consequent forgetfulness of the "long-suffering" which might extend a day into a thousand years (2 Pet. iii. 3—8). It is obviously doing violence to the plain meaning of the words to dilute them into the statement that the Son of Man did not communicate the knowledge which He possessed as the Son of God. If we are perplexed at the mystery of this confession in One in whom we recognise the presence of "the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. i. 19; ii. 9), we may find that which may help us at least to wait patiently for the full understanding of the mystery in St. Paul's teaching, that the eternal Word in becoming flesh, "emptied Himself" (see Note on Phil. ii. 7) of the infinity which belongs to the divine attributes, and took upon Him the limitations necessarily

no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. (37) But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. (38) For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking,[a] marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, (39) and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. (40) Then shall two be in the field;[b] the one shall be taken, and the other left. (41) Two *women shall be* grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

(42) Watch therefore:[c] for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. (43) But know this,[d] that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. (44) Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. (45) Who then is a faithful

[c] Mark 13. 35.

[a] Gen. 7. 5; Luke 17. 26.

[d] Luke 12. 39; 1 Thess. 5. 2; Rev. 16. 15.

[b] Luke 17. 36.

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incidental to man's nature, even when untainted by evil and in fullest fellowship, through the Eternal Spirit, with the Father.

(37) **As the days of Noe were.**—Here again we note an interesting coincidence with the Epistles of St. Peter, both of which teem, more than any other portions of the New Testament, with references to the history to which the mind of the writer had been directed by his Master's teaching, 1 Pet. iii. 20; 2 Pet. ii. 5; iii. 6. This is, perhaps, all the more noticeable from the fact that the report of the discourse in St. Mark does not give the reference, neither indeed does that in St. Luke, but substitutes for it a general warning-call to watchfulness and prayer. Possibly (though all such conjectures are more or less arbitrary) the two Evangelists who were writing for the Gentile Christians were led to omit the allusion to a history which was not so familiar to those whom they had in view as it was to the Hebrew readers of St. Matthew's Gospel.

(39) **So shall also the coming of the Son of man be.**—The words justify the interpretation given above of verses 29, 30. If the "signs" of the Advent were to be phenomena visible to the eye of sense, there could not be this reckless apathy of nescience. If they are to be tokens, "signs of the times," which can be discerned only by the illumined insight of the faithful, the hardened unbelief on the one side, and the expectant watchfulness on the other, are the natural result of the power or the want of power to discern them.

(40) **The one shall be taken.**—Literally, the present tense being used to express the certainty of the future, *one is taken, and one is left.* The form of the expression is somewhat obscure, and leaves it uncertain which of the two alternatives is the portion of the chosen ones. Is the man who is "taken" received into fellowship with Christ, while the other is abandoned? or is he carried away as by the storm of judgment, while the other is set free? On the whole, the use of the Greek word in other passages (as, *e.g.*, in chap. i. 20, 24; xii. 45; John i. 11; xiv. 3) is in favour of the former interpretation. What is taught in any case is that the day of judgment will be, as by an inevitable law, a day of separation, according to the diversity of character which may exist in the midst of the closest fellowship in outward life.

(41) **Two women shall be grinding at the mill.**—The words bring before us the picture of the lowest form of female labour, in which one woman holds the lower stone of the small hand-mill of the East, while another turns the upper stone and grinds the corn. In Judg. xvi. 21, and Lam. v. 13, the employment appears as the crowning degradation of male captives taken in battle. It is probable that in this case, as in that of the fig-tree, the illustration may have been suggested by what was present to our Lord's view at the time. The Mount of Olives might well have presented to His gaze, even as He spoke, the two labourers in the field, the two women at the mill.

(43) **But know this.**—The verses from 42 to 51 have nothing corresponding to them in the reports of the discourse given by St. Mark and St. Luke, but are found almost verbatim in another discourse reported by St. Luke xii. 42, *et seq.* Here, as elsewhere, we have to choose between the assumption of a repetition of the same words, or of a transfer of what was spoken on one occasion to another; and of the two, the former hypothesis seems the more probable. It may be noted, however, that the variations in the three reports of this discourse indicate a comparatively free treatment of it, the natural result, probably, of its having been often reproduced, wholly or in part, orally before it was committed to writing. On ordinary grounds of evidence, St. Mark's report, assuming his connection with St. Peter, would seem likely to come nearest to the very words spoken by our Lord.

**The goodman of the house.**—Better, as in chap. xx. 1., *householder.*

**In what watch.**—The night-watches were four in number, of three hours each. So in Luke xii. 38, we have "the second or the third watch" specified. The allusion to the "thief coming" would seem to have passed into the proverbial saying, that the day of the Lord would come "as a thief in the night," quoted by St. Paul in 1 Thess. v. 2.

(44) **In such an hour as ye think not.**—The words are important as showing that even the signs which were to be as the budding of the fig-tree at the approach of summer were intended only to rouse the faithful to watchfulness, not to enable men to fix the times and the seasons which the Father hath set in His own power. The apparent destiny of failure which has attended on all attempts to go beyond this in the interpretation of the apocalyptic eschatology of Scripture might have been avoided had men been more careful to restrain here also their efforts after knowledge "within the limits of the knowable."

(45) **Who then is a faithful . . ?**—Better, *Who then is the faithful and wise servant?* The latter word in the Greek is that which ethical writers had used to express the moral wisdom which adapts means to ends, as contrasted with the wisdom of pure contemplation on the one hand, or technical skill on the other.

**To give them meat in due season.**—Better, *to give them their food.* In the parallel passage of Luke xii. 42, the word used means "a measure or fixed and wise servant,[a] whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? (46) Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. (47) Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. (48) But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; (49) and shall begin to smite *his* fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; (50) the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of, (51) and shall cut him asunder,[1] and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

[a] Luke 12. 42.

[1] Or, *cut him off.*

A.D. 33.

CHAPTER XXV. — (1) Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps,

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portion of meal or flour." The comparison brings before us one function of the minister of Christ. He is to supply men with the spiritual food which they need for the sustenance of their higher life. It may be the "spiritual milk" of 1 Pet. ii. 2, Heb. v. 12, 1 Cor. iii. 2; it may be the "strong meat" or "solid food." There is an art, as it were, of spiritual dietetics, which requires tact and discernment as well as faithfulness. The wise servant will seek to discover not only the right kind of food, but the right season for giving it. An apparent parallel presents itself in the common interpretation of "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. ii. 15), but the imagery implied in that phrase is probably of an entirely different character. (See Note there.)

(46) **Blessed is that servant.**—The words, taken in their letter, seem to refer only to those who shall thus be found at the time of the final Advent. Christian insight has, however, rightly given them a wider application. As there are "days of the Lord" in the history of churches and nations, so the Lord comes to men in the crises of their individual lives; and one such coming is that day of death which closes the trial-time of their earthly life, and brings them into the presence of the Judge.

(47) **He shall make him ruler.**—The words are noteworthy as among the indications that the work of the faithful servant does not cease, either after his own removal from his earthly labour, or even after the final consummation of the kingdom. Over and above the joy of the beatific vision, or what is figured to us as the peace of Paradise, there will still be a work to be done, analogous to that which has been the man's training here, and in it there will be scope for all the faculties and energies that have been thus disciplined and developed. (Comp. Notes on chap. xxv. 21; Luke xix. 17.)

(48) **But and if that evil servant.**—Better, *but if that evil servant*, the "and" being in modern English usage superfluous, and representing originally a different conjunction.

**My lord delayeth his coming.**—The temper described is identical with that portrayed in 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4. The words are memorable as implying the prescience, even in the immediate context of words that indicate nearness, that there would be what to men would seem delay. Those who looked on that delay as St. Peter looked on it would continue watchful, but the selfish and ungodly would be tempted by it to forget that Christ comes to men in more senses and more ways than one. The tyranny and sensuality which have at times stained the annals of the Church of Christ have had their origin in this forgetfulness, that though the final coming may be delayed, the Judge is ever near, even at the doors (Jas. v. 9).

(51) **And shall cut him asunder.**—Here also, as in the case of the faithful servant, the words have more than one fulfilment. The form of punishment (one which, in its literal sense, belongs to the inventive cruelty of Eastern kings) would seem here to have been chosen for its figurative fitness. The man had been a hypocrite, double-minded, trying to serve two masters, and his Lord, with the sharp sword of judgment, smites through the false, apparent unity of his life, and reveals its duplicity.

**There shall be weeping.**—As elsewhere, "*the* weeping and *the* gnashing."

## XXV.

(1) **Then shall the kingdom of heaven . . .**—The three parables of this chapter appear here as in closest sequence to the great discourse of chap. xxiv., and are as its natural conclusion. On the other hand, no trace of such parables being then spoken appears either in St. Mark or St. Luke, and their absence is at least a phenomenon that calls for explanation. That which seems most probable is that the strictly apocalyptic part of the discourse was, as the destruction of Jerusalem drew near, frequently impressed by oral teaching on the minds of disciples, and then reproduced in writing, with the diversities of detail incidental to such a process, as a document complete in itself, while it was reserved for St. Matthew—here as elsewhere, eager in collecting parables—to add the teaching that actually followed it. The parables have a common aim, as impressing on the disciples the necessity at once of watchfulness and of activity in good, but each has, it will be seen, a very distinct scope of its own.

**Be likened unto ten virgins.**—On the general meaning of the symbolism of the Wedding Feast enough has been said in the Notes on chap. xxii. 2. Here, as there, we have to remember, that while the bride is the Church in her collective unity, the contrasted characters of the members of the Church are represented here by the virgins, as there by the guests who were invited; and for this reason, probably, the bride herself is not introduced as part of the imagery of the parable. As far as the frame-work of the figure is concerned, the stage in the marriage rites which is brought before us is the return of the bridegroom, after the espousals have been completed in the house of the bride's father, to his own abode, bringing the bride with him. Jewish custom required the bridesmaids to wait at the bridegroom's house, to receive him and the bride, and as this was commonly after sunset, they were provided with lamps or torches.

**Which took their lamps.**—Better, *torches*, as the word is rendered in John xviii. 3. These were of tow, steeped in oil and fastened to the end of sticks.

and went forth to meet the bridegroom. (2) And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish. (3) They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: (4) but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. (5) While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. (6) And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. (7) Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. (8) And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.[1] (9) But the wise answered, saying, *Not so;* lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. (10) And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. (11) Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. (12) But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. (13) Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.[a]

(14) For *the kingdom of heaven is* as a man travelling into a far country,[b] *who* called his own servants, and delivered

[a] ch. 24. 42; Mark 13. 33.

[1] Or, *going out.*

[b] Luke 19. 12.

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(2) **Five of them were wise.**—The word is the same as in chap. xxiv. 45, were see Note.

(3) **Took no oil with them.**—In the interpretation of the parable, the lamp or torch is obviously the outward life of holiness by which the disciple of Christ lets his light shine before men (v. 16), and the "oil" is the divine grace, or more definitely, the gift of the Holy Spirit, without which the torch first burns dimly and then expires. The foolish virgins neglected to seek that supply, either from the Great Giver, or through the human agencies by which He graciously imparts it.

(5) **While the bridegroom tarried.**—Strictly speaking, the time thus described includes the whole interval between our Lord's Ascension and His final Advent; but looking to the law of "springing and germinant accomplishments," which we have recognised as applicable to the whole subject, we may see in it that which answers to any period in the history of any church, or, indeed, in the life of any member of a church, in which things go smoothly and as after the routine of custom. At such a time even the wise and good are apt to slumber, and the crisis, which is to them, if not to the world at large, as the bridegroom's coming, takes them by surprise; but they have, what the foolish have not, the reserved force of steadfast faith and divine help to fall back upon. We may note that the "delay" in this case is followed by a less glaring form of evil than that in chap. xxiv. 48. Not reckless and brutal greed, but simple apathy and neglect is the fault noted for condemnation.

**Slumbered and slept.**—The first word implies the "nodding" which indicates the first approach of drowsiness, the second the continuous sleeping.

(6) **At midnight.**—The hour was obviously later than the virgins had expected, and in this we may see a half-veiled suggestion of a like lateness in the coming of the true Bridegroom. The "cry" would be that of the companions of the bridegroom, or of the crowd that mingled with them. In the interpretation of the parable we may see in it, over and above its reference to the final Advent, that which answers to the stir and thrill that announce any coming crisis in the history of Church or people.

(8) **Our lamps are gone out.**—Better, as in the margin, *are going out.* They were not quite extinguished; the flax was still smoking.

(9) **Not so.**—The words, as the italics show, are not in the Greek. They are, perhaps, necessary to complete the sense in English; but there is a tone of regretful tenderness in the way in which, in the original, the wise virgins give the reason that makes compliance with the request impossible, without directly uttering a refusal.

**Go ye rather to them that sell.**—This feature in the parable is too remarkable to be passed over lightly, especially as the "exchangers" in the parable that follows are clearly more or less analogous. We have to ask, then, who they are that, in the interpretation of the parable, according to the *data* already ascertained, answer to "them that sell." And the answer is, that they are the pastors and teachers of the Church—the stewards of the mysteries of God. Through them, whether as preachers of the divine Word of Wisdom, or as administering the sacraments which are signs and means of grace, men may, by God's appointment, obtain the gift and grace they need. The "buying" and "selling" belong, of course, in their literal sense, to the parable only. No gift of God can be purchased with money (Acts viii. 20). But the words are not, therefore, any more than in chap. xiii. 44—46 (where see Notes), destitute of meaning. Men may "buy" the truth which they are not to sell (Prov. xxiii. 23). They are invited to buy the "wine and milk," which symbolise God's spiritual gifts, "without money and without price" (Isa. lv. 1). The price that God requires is the consecration of their heart (Prov. xxiii. 26).

(10) **While they went to buy.**—The words imply that had they gone earlier, as the wise virgins, by hypothesis, had done, all would have been well. The mistake lay in their not having gone before. It is too late, in other words, to have recourse to the ordinary means of grace for the formation of character, to ordinances, sacraments, rules of life, at the moment of the crisis in personal or national life, which answers to the coming of the bridegroom. The door is then shut, and is no longer opened even to those who knock.

(12) **I know you not.**—The sentence of rejection is clothed in the same language as in chap. vii. 23. The Lord "knoweth them that are His" (2 Tim. ii. 19), and their blessedness will be to know Him even as they are known (1 Cor. xiii. 12).

(14) **For the kingdom of heaven.**—The italicised words are introduced for the sake of grammatical completeness. The Greek runs simply, "For as a man . . . . called his own servants," with no formal close to the comparison. The parable thus introduced has obviously many points in common with that of the Pounds recorded by St. Luke (xix. 12—27), but the distinctive features of each are also so characteristic

unto them his goods. (15) And unto one he gave five talents,[1] to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. (16) Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents. (17) And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two. (18) But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. (19) After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. (20) And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents, behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. (21) His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy

[1] A talent is £187 10s.; ch. 18. 24.

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that it will be well to deal with each separately, and to reserve a comparison of the two till both have been interpreted.

The outward framework of the parable lies in the Eastern way of dealing with property in the absence of the owner. Two courses were open as an approximation to what we call investment. The more primitive and patriarchal way was for the absentee to make his slaves his agents. They were to till his land and sell the produce, or to use the money which he left with them as capital in trading. In such cases there was, of course, often an understanding that they should receive part of the profits, but being their master's slaves, there was no formal contract. The other course was to take advantage of the banking, money-changing, money-lending system, of which the Phœnicians were the inventors, and which at the time was in full operation throughout the Roman empire. The bankers received money on deposit and paid interest on it, and then lent it at a higher per-centage, or employed it in trade, or (as did the *publicani* at Rome) in farming the revenues of a province. This was therefore the natural resource, as investment in stocks or companies is with us, for those who had not energy to engage in business.

(15) **Unto one he gave five talents.**—On the value of the talent see the Note on chap. xviii. 24. The languages of modern Europe bear witness, in their use of the word, to the impression which the parable has made. A man's energies, gifts, capacities, are the "talents," for the use of which he will have to render an account. We speak, though in this case the word is hardly more than an ill-coined vulgarism, of him who possesses them as "talented." Common, however, as this use of the word is, it tends to obscure the true meaning of the parable. Here there is an "ability" presupposed in each case, prior to the distribution of the talents, and we are led accordingly to the conclusion that the latter stand here less for natural gifts than for external opportunities—for possessions, offices, what we call "spheres of duty." These, we are told, are, in the wisdom of God, given to men, in the long-run, "according to their several ability." So taken, the parable does not repeat the lesson of that which precedes it, but is addressed, not as that is to all Christians, but specifically to those who hold any vocation or ministry in the Church of Christ, or have in their hands outward resources for working in it. It is, perhaps, not altogether fanciful to trace, as a first application, in the three-fold scale of distribution, a correspondence with the three groups, four in each, into which the twelve Apostles were divided. The sons of Jona and of Zebedee were as those who had received five talents; the less conspicuous middle group answered to those who received but two; while the "wicked and slothful servant" finds his representative in the only disciple in the third, or last group, who is at all conspicuous.

(16) **Traded with the same.**—Literally, *wrought*, or, *was busy*. The fact that the capital was doubled implies that the trading was both active and prosperous.

(18) **He that had received one . . .**—There is something strikingly suggestive in the fact that those who had received the higher sums were "good and faithful," and that it was left to the man who had received the smallest to fail in his duty. Failure in the use of wider opportunities brings with it a greater condemnation; but it is true, as a fact of human nature which our Lord thus recognised, that in such cases there is commonly less risk of failure. The very presence of the opportunities brings with it a sense of responsibility. So faithfulness in a very little receives its full reward, but the consciousness of having but a little, when men do not believe in their Master's wisdom and love in giving them but a little, tempts to discontent and so to sloth on the one hand, and on the other, as with Judas, to hasty and unscrupulous greed of immediate gain.

(19) **After a long time.**—Here, as in the previous parable, there is a faint suggestion, as it were, of a longer delay than men looked for in the Coming which is the counterpart to this.

(20) **I have gained beside them five talents more.**—The result of the right use of opportunities could not be otherwise expressed within the limits of the imagery of the parable. In the kingdom of God the gain commonly takes another form than the mere increase of the gifts or opportunities which we call "talents" (though even here that increase is often the result of faithfulness), and appears as good done to men and souls gained for God.

(21) **I will make thee ruler over many things.**—Better, *I will set thee over many things*. The word "ruler" is not in the Greek. Here again, as in chap. xxiv. 47, we have a glimpse given us into the future that lies behind the veil. So far as the parable brings before us prominently either the final judgment or that which follows upon each man's death, we see that the reward of faithful work lies not in rest only, but in enlarged activity. The world to come is thus connected by a law of continuity with that in which we live; and those who have so used their "talents" as to turn many to righteousness, may find new spheres of action, beyond all our dreams, in that world in which the ties of brotherhood that have been formed on earth are not extinguished, but, so we may reverently believe, multiplied and strengthened.

**Enter thou into the joy of thy lord.**—The words are almost too strong for the framework of the parable.

of thy lord. (22) He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. (23) His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. (24) Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: (25) and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine. (26) His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: (27) thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. (28) Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents. (29) For unto every one that hath shall be given,[a] and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which

[a] ch. 13. 12; Mark 4. 25; Luke 8. 18.

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A human master would hardly use such language to his slaves. But here, as yet more in the parable that follows, the reality breaks through the symbol, and we hear the voice of the divine Master speaking to His servants, and He bids them share His joy, for that joy also had its source (as He told them but a few hours later) in loyal and faithful service, in having "kept His Father's commandments" (John xv. 10, 11).

(24) **I knew thee that thou art an hard man.**—The word "hard" points to stiffness of character—St. Luke's "austere," to harshness and bitterness. Was the plea an after-thought, put forward as an excuse for what had been originally sloth pure and simple? On that view, the lesson taught is that neglect of loyal service leads before long to disloyal thoughts. But it may have been our Lord's intention to represent the slothful servant as having all along cherished the thought which he now pleads in his defence. That had been at the root of his neglect. The eye sees only so far as it brings with it the power to see, and therefore he had never seen in his master either generous love or justice in rewarding. The proverb, "One soweth, another reapeth" (John iv. 37), taken on its darker and more worldly side, seemed to him the rule of his master's conduct. So in the souls of men there springs up at times the thought that all the anomalies of earthly rule are found in that of God, that He too is arbitrary, vindictive, pitiless, like earthly kings; and that thought, as it kills love, so it paralyses the energy which depends on love. So, we may believe, following the thought already thrown out, the heart of the Traitor was full of envy and bitterness because he stood so low in the company of the Twelve, and thought hardly of his Master because He thus dealt with him and yet looked for faithful service.

(25) **And I was afraid.**—The words are those of simulated rather than real fear. That would have led him to shrink from the unfaithful service which was sure to draw down his master's anger. The excuse did but cover the implied taunt that he dared not venture anything in the service of a master who would make no allowance for intentions where the result was failure. So, in the life of the soul, a man wanting in the spirit of loyalty and trust contents himself with making no use of opportunities, and therefore they are to him as though they were not, except that they increase his guilt and his condemnation.

(26) **Thou wicked and slothful servant.**—The words of the master pierce below the false excuse, and reveal the faults which had eaten like a canker into the man's heart and soul.

(27) **Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers.**—Literally, *table* or *counter-keepers*, just as bankers were originally those who sat at their *bancum*, or bench. These were the bankers referred to in the Note on verse 14. In that case, if the servant had been honestly conscious of his own want of power, there would have been at least some interest allowed on the deposit.

**Usury.**—Better, *interest;* the word not necessarily implying, as usury does now, anything illegal or exorbitant. The question—What answers to this "giving to the exchangers" in the interpretation of the parable?—is, as has been said, analogous to that which asks the meaning of "them that sell" in the answer of the wise virgins in verse 9. Whatever machinery or organisation the Church possesses for utilising opportunities which individual men fail to exercise, may be thought of as analogous to the banking-system of the old world. When men in the middle ages gave to a cathedral or a college, when they subscribe largely now to hospitals or missions, doing this and nothing more, they are "giving their money to the exchangers." It is not so acceptable an offering as willing and active service, but if it be honestly and humbly given, the giver will not lose his reward.

(28) **Take therefore the talent from him.**—The sentence passed on the slothful servant confirms the view which sees in the "talents" the external opportunities given to a man for the use of his abilities. The abilities themselves cannot be thus transferred; the opportunities can, and often are, even in the approximate working out of the law of retribution which we observe on earth. Here also men give to him that hath, and faithful work is rewarded by openings for work of a higher kind. So, assuming a law, if not of continuity, at least of analogy, to work behind the veil, we may see in our Lord's words that one form of the penalty of the slothful will be to see work which might have been theirs to do, done by those who have been faithful while on earth.

(29) **Unto every one that hath.**—The meaning and practical working of the law thus stated have been sufficiently illustrated in the Note on verse 28. What is noteworthy here is the extreme generality with which the law is stated. Analogies of that law are, it need even scarcely be said, to be found both in nature and in human society. Non-user tends to invalidate legal

he hath. (30) And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

(31) When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: (32) and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: (33) and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. (34) Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: (35) for I was an hungred,[a] and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: (36) naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. (37) Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed *thee?* or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink? (38) When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee?* (39) Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? (40) And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren,

[a] Isa. 58. 7; Ezek. 18. 7.

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right. A muscle that is not exercised tends to degenerate and lose its power.

(30) **Cast ye the unprofitable servant . . .**—We have had so far the special punishment of sloth, but it is not complete without the solemn and emphatic recurrence of the "darkness" and "gnashing of teeth."

(31) **When the Son of man shall come.**—We commonly speak of the concluding portion of this chapter as the parable of the Sheep and the Goats, but it is obvious from its very beginning that it passes beyond the region of parable into that of divine realities, and that the sheep and goats form only a subordinate and parenthetic illustration. The form of the announcement is in part based, as indeed are all the thoughts connected with the final Advent, upon the vision of Dan. vii. 13. The "throne of His glory" is that which He shares with "the Ancient of Days," the throne of Jehovah, surrounded with the brightness of the Shechinah.

(32) **Before him shall be gathered all nations.**—Better, *all the nations*, or even better, perhaps, *all the Gentiles.* The word is that which, when used, as here, with the article, marks out, with scarcely an exception, the heathen nations of the world as distinguished from God's people Israel (as, *e.g.*, in Rom. xv. 11, 12; Eph. ii. 11). The word, thus taken, serves as the key to the distinctive teaching that follows. We have had in this chapter, (1) in the Wise and Foolish Virgins, the law of judgment for all members of the Church of Christ; (2) in the Talents, that for all who hold any office or ministry in the Church: now we have (3) the law by which those shall be judged who have lived and died as heathens, not knowing the name of Christ, and knowing God only as revealed in Nature or in the law written in their hearts. Every stage in what follows confirms this interpretation.

**As a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.**—Elsewhere the shepherd's work is the symbol of protective, self-sacrificing love, and, as such, our Lord had emphatically claimed for Himself the title of the Good Shepherd (John x. 14). Here we are reminded that even the shepherd has at times to execute the sentence of judgment which involves separation. The "right" hand and the "left" are used, according to the laws of what we might almost call a natural symbolism, as indicating respectively good and evil, acceptance and rejection.

(34) **Ye blessed of my Father.**—The Greek is not identical with "blessed *by* my Father," but means rather, "ye blessed ones who *belong to* my Father."

**Inherit the kingdom prepared for you.**—Yes; not for Israel only, or those among the brethren who should in this life believe in Christ, had the kingdom been prepared, but for these also. For those who came from east and west and north and south (chap. viii. 11; Luke xiii. 29)—for all who in every nation feared God and wrought righteousness (Acts x. 35)—had that kingdom been prepared from everlasting, though it was only through the work of Christ, and by ultimate union with Him, that it could be realised and enjoyed.

(35) **I was an hungred.**—The passage furnishes six out of the list of the seven corporal works of mercy in Christian ethics, the seventh being found in the care and nurture of the fatherless.

(36) **Ye visited me.**—The Greek word is somewhat stronger than the modern meaning of the English, and includes "looking after," "caring for." The verb is formed from the same root as *Episcopos*, the bishop, or overseer of the Church.

(37) **When saw we thee an hungred?**—It is clear that this question of surprise could not be asked by any who, as believers in Christ, have come under this teaching. They know, even now, the full significance of their acts of mercy, and that knowledge is as their strongest motive. But in the lips of the heathen who stand before the judgment-seat such a question will be natural enough. They have acted from what seemed merely human affection towards merely human objects, and they are therefore rightly represented as astonished when they hear that they have, in their ministrations to the sons of men, been ministering to the Son of Man.

(40) **Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren.**—The words are true, in different degrees of intensity, in proportion as the relationship is consciously recognised, of every member of the family of man. Of all it is true that He, the Lord, who took their flesh and blood, "is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb. ii. 11). We have here, in its highest and divinest form, that utterance of sympathy which we admire even in one of like passions with ourselves. We find that He too "counts nothing human alien from Himself."

ye have done *it* unto me. (41) Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me,[a] ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: (42) for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: (43) I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. (44) Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? (45) Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me. (46) And these shall go away into everlasting punishment:[b] but the righteous into life eternal.

[a] Ps. 6. 8; ch. 7. 23.

[b] Dan. 12. 2; John 5. 29.

(41) **Ye cursed.**—The omission of the words "of My Father," which might have seemed necessary to complete the parallelism with verse 34, is every way significant. He is not the author of the curse. Those who have brought themselves under the curse by their own evil deeds He no longer acknowledges as His.

(44) **When saw we thee . . . ?**—There is, as before, an unconsciousness of the greatness of the things that had been done for good or evil. Men thought that they were only neglecting their fellow-men, and were, it may be, thinking that they had wronged no man. It is significant that the sins here are, all of them, sins of omission. As in the case of the parable of the Talents, the opportunities (here those that are common to all men, as there those that attached to some office or ministry in the Church) have simply not been used.

(46) **Everlasting punishment . . . life eternal.**—The two adjectives represent one and the same Greek word, *αἰώνιος*, and we ought therefore to have the same word in both clauses in the English. Of the two words, "eternal" is philologically preferable, as being traceably connected with the Greek, the Latin *æternus* being derived from *ætas*, and that from *ævum*, which, in its turn, is but another form of the Greek ἀιών (*æon*). The bearing of the passage on the nature and duration of future punishment is too important to be passed over; and though the question is too wide to be determined by a single text, all that the text contributes to its solution should be fully and fairly weighed. On the one hand, then, it is urged that as we hold the "eternal life" to have no end, so we must hold also the endlessness of the "eternal fire." On the other hand, it must be admitted (1) that the Greek word which is rendered "eternal," does not in itself involve endlessness, but rather duration, whether through an age or a succession of ages; and that it is therefore applied in the New Testament to periods of time that have had both beginning and ending (Rom. xvi. 25, where the Greek is "from *æonian* times," our version giving "since the world began"—comp. 2 Tim. i. 9; Tit. i. 2), and in the Greek version of the Old Testament to institutions and ordinances that were confessedly to wax old and vanish away (Gen. xvii. 8; Lev. iii. 17); and (2) that in the language of a Greek Father (Gregory of Nyssa, who held the doctrine of the restitution of all things) it is even connected with the word "interval," as expressing the duration of the penal discipline which was, he believed, to come to an end after an *æonian* intervening period. Strictly speaking, therefore, the word, as such, and apart from its association with any qualifying substantive, implies a vast undefined duration, rather than one in the full sense of the word "infinite." The solemnity of the words at the close of the great prophecy of judgment tends obviously to the conclusion that our Lord meant His disciples, and through them His people in all ages, to dwell upon the division which was involved in the very idea of judgment, as one which was not to be changed. Men must reap as they have sown, and the consequences of evil deeds, or of failure to perform good deeds, must, in the nature of the case, work out their retribution, so far as we can see, with no assignable limit. On the other hand, once again, (1) the symbolism of Scriptural language suggests the thought that "fire" is not necessarily the material element that inflicts unutterable torture on the body, and that the penalty of sin may possibly be an intense and terrible consciousness of the presence of God, who is as a "consuming fire" (Heb. xii. 29) in the infinite majesty of His holiness, united with the sense of being at variance with it, and therefore under condemnation. And (2), assuming the perpetuity of the "punishment," it does not involve necessarily an equality of suffering for the whole multitude of the condemned at any time, nor for any single soul throughout its whole duration. Without dwelling, as some have done, on the fact that the Greek word here used for "punishment" had acquired a definite significance as used by ethical writers for reformative rather than vindictive or purely retributive suffering (Aristot. *Rhet.* i. 10), it is yet conceivable that the acceptance of suffering as deserved may mitigate its severity; and we cannot, consistently with any true thoughts of God, conceive of Him as fixing, by an irresistible decree, the will of any created being in the attitude of resistance to His will. That such resistance is fatally possible we see by a wide and painful experience, and as the "hardening" in such cases is the result of a divine law, it may, from one point of view, be described as the act of God (Rom. ix. 18); but a like experience attests that, though suffering does not cease to be suffering, it may yet lose something of its bitterness by being accepted as deserved, and the law of continuity and analogy, which, to say the least, must be allowed some weight in our thoughts of the life to come, suggests that it may be so there also. (For other aspects of this momentous question, see Notes on Matt. v. 26; xviii. 34.) (3) As to the nature of the "eternal life" which is thus promised to those who follow the guidance of the Light that lighteth every man, we must remember, that within a few short hours of the utterance of these words, it was defined by our Lord in the hearing of those who listened to them: "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (John xvii. 3). That life in its very nature tends to perpetuity, and it is absolutely inconceivable that after having lasted through the ages which the word "eternal," on any etymological explanation, implies, it should then fail and cease.

CHAPTER XXVI.—(1) And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, (2) Ye know that after two days is *the feast of* the passover,[a] and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified. (3) Then assembled together the chief priests,[b] and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, (4) and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill *him.* (5) But they said, Not on the feast *day*, lest there be an uproar among the people.

(6) Now when Jesus was in Bethany,[c] in the house of Simon the leper,

A.D. 33.

[a] Mark 14. 1; Luke 22. 1; John 13. 1.

[c] Mark 14. 3; John 11. 1.

[b] John 11. 47.

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XXVI.

(1) The portion of the Gospel narrative on which we now enter is common, as far as the main facts are concerned, to all the four Gospels, and this gives to every detail in it a special interest. We cannot ignore the fact that it brings with it also some peculiar difficulties. The first three Gospels are in substantial agreement as to the order of the facts and the time at which they occurred. But the fourth, in some respects the fullest and most striking, differs from the Three: (1) in omitting all mention that the Last Supper of our Lord with His disciples was also the Paschal Supper, and at least appearing to imply (John xiii. 1; xviii. 28) that it was before it; (2) in also omitting all record (*a*) of the institution of the Lord's Supper as the sign of the New Covenant, and (*b*) of the agony in Gethsemane; (3) in recording much, both as to our Lord's acts and words, which the Three do not record. It will be enough to discuss once for all the problems which thus present themselves, and it is believed that the right place for the discussion will be in the Notes on the Gospel which first presents the difficulties. Here, therefore, our work will be confined to the text actually before us, with only such passing references to the narrative of St. John as occasion may require. As far as the variations in the first three Gospels are concerned, they are sufficiently explained by the hypothesis that they had a common origin in a history at first delivered orally, and reduced afterwards to writing, with the diversities which are, in the nature of the case, incident to such a process.

**All these sayings.**—The words clearly point to the great discourse of chaps. xxiv. and xxv. The "disciples" to whom our Lord then spoke of His betrayal and death, may have been either the four who are named in Mark xiii. 3, or the whole company of the Twelve. In the latter case, we must assume that the rest had joined Him, either during the utterance of the discourse or after it was finished.

(2) **After two days is the feast of the passover.**—Assuming (as the facts of the case lead us to assume, but see Notes on John xiii. 1) the Last Supper to have coincided with the actual Paschal Feast, the point of time at which the words were spoken would either be some time on what we should call the Tuesday evening of the Passion week, or, following the Jewish mode of speech which found three days in the interval between our Lord's entombment and resurrection, on the morning or afternoon of Wednesday.

(3) **Then assembled together.**—We learn from John xi. 49, 50, that the plan, as far as Caiaphas was concerned, had been formed before, immediately after the raising of Lazarus. What had happened since—the kingly entry, the expulsion of the money-changers, the way in which our Lord had baffled their attempt to entrap Him in His speech—would all work as so many motives to immediate action. The meeting now assembled may have been either a formal session of the Sanhedrin, or an informal conference of its chief members prior to the regular meeting. The former seems, on the whole, the more probable. The "chief priests" were the heads of the twenty-four courses; the elders of the people were the representatives—how elected or selected we do not know—of the citizens of Jerusalem. St. Mark and St. Luke name "scribes" instead of "elders." These two bodies may have been identical, but more probably the scribes of the Council represented the whole class of interpreters of the Law, who bore that name in its wider sense.

**The high priest, who was called Caiaphas.**—The name was a distinctive one added to his proper name of Joseph. Of his previous history we know that he had married the daughter of Annas, who had filled the office of high priest before him (John xviii. 13), and who still occupied, possibly as *Nasi* or President, an influential position in the Council and retained his titular pre-eminence. (See Note on Luke iii. 2.) He had been high priest from the commencement of our Lord's ministry, and had, therefore, watched His ministry in Jerusalem with a jealous fear. We may probably trace his influence in the mission of the scribes from Jerusalem, whom we have seen as opponents of that ministry in Galilee (Mark iii. 22; Luke v. 17). The meeting in his house implied a coalition of parties commonly opposed, for Caiaphas and his personal adherents were Sadducees (Acts v. 17), and as such, courted the favour of their Roman rulers (John xi. 48), while the scribes were, for the most part, Pharisees, and assertors of national independence.

(4) **That they might take Jesus by subtilty.**—The plan implied in these words and in those that follow ("not on the feast day") would seem to have been hastened in its accomplishment by the unexpected treachery of Judas. They had intended to wait till the feast was over, but the temptation thus offered was too great to be resisted, and they accordingly stepped out of the limits which their caution had suggested, and were content to run the risk even of an "uproar among the people" within the twenty-four hours of the Paschal Feast.

(6) **Now when Jesus was in Bethany.**—The narrative is given out of its proper order on account of its connection (as indicated in St. John's record) with the act of the Traitor. St. John fixes it (xii. 1) at six days before the Passover, *i.e.*, on the evening that preceded the entry into Jerusalem. It was, therefore, a feast such as Jews were wont to hold at the close of the Sabbath.

**In the house of Simon the leper.**—Of the man so described we know nothing beyond the fact thus mentioned. It is not likely, had he been a leper at the time, that men would have gathered to a feast at his house, and it is natural to infer that our Lord had healed him, but that the name still adhered to him to distinguish him from other Simons. We learn from St. John (xii. 2) that Lazarus was there, and that Martha, true to her character, was busy "serving." The

(7) there came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat *at meat*. (8) But when his disciples saw *it*, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose *is* this waste? (9) For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. (10) When Jesus understood *it*, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she

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Twelve were also there, and probably many others. The incident that follows is narrated by all the Evangelists except St. Luke, who may either not have heard it from his informants, or, if he had heard it, may have passed it over as having already recorded a fact of like character (Luke vii. 37—40).

(7) **There came unto him a woman.**—We learn from St. John (xii. 3) that this was Mary the sister of Lazarus. It is hardly conceivable (unless we conjecture that she came in veiled, and that St. John alone knew her) that the writers of the first two Gospels, or those from whom they derived their knowledge, could have been ignorant who she was, and we can only see in their suppression of the name an example of the singular reticence which sealed their lips as to every member of the family at Bethany. A prevalent tradition or conjecture in the Western Church has identified the sister of Lazarus with the woman that was a sinner, of Luke vii., and, on this assumption what we now read was a repetition of an offering of love that had been made before. Of this, however, there is not the shadow of proof (see Notes on Luke vii. 37, 38). It may well have been, on the other hand, that the household of Bethany had heard of that act, and that this suggested the way in which love and gratitude now manifested themselves.

**An alabaster box of very precious ointment.**—The box was probably a vase of the material described as alabaster (according to one etymology, however, that word described originally the shape of the vase, as made without handles, and was subsequently extended to the material of which such vases were commonly made), with the lid cemented down, so as not to admit of extraction like a cork or stopper. St. John (xii. 3) describes the quantity as a pound (*litra*=about twelve ounces); and both St. John and St. Mark add that it was "of spikenard." The word so rendered, however (*pistikè*), is found only in those two passages (Mark xiv. 3, John xii. 3), and it is open to question whether it bears this meaning, or means "pure, genuine, unadulterated." The "nard" so described is identified by botanists with the *Nardostachys jatamansi*, the *sumbul* of India, but was probably applied by Greeks and Romans to other perfumes. The value of the ointment is roughly estimated afterwards at three hundred *denarii* (John xii. 5). Such preparations, like genuine *âtar* of roses in the modern East, consisting, as they did mainly, in the essential oils of carefully cultivated flowers, often fetched an almost fabulous price. The fact that Mary had such an unguent by her indicates that the household of Bethany belonged to the comparatively wealthy class, and so agrees with the general impression left by the record of John xi. It is a probable conjecture that a like costly unguent had been used in embalming the body of the brother who had so recently been raised from the dead, and that this gave a special point to our Lord's comment on the act. St. Mark adds that she broke or crushed the vessel in order to pour out the ointment; St. John, that she anointed His feet, and wiped them with her hair.

(8) **When his disciples saw it.**—There is a singular narrowing of the limits in the three narratives. St. Mark reports that "some had indignation;" St. John (xii. 4), as knowing who had whispered the first word of blame, fixes the uncharitable judgment on "Judas Iscariot, Simon's son." The narrow, covetous soul of the Traitor could see nothing in the lavish gift but a "waste" (literally, *perdition*) that was matter for reproach. There is something almost terribly suggestive in the fact that our Lord repeats the self-same word when He describes Judas as a "son of perdition" (John xvii. 12). He had wasted that which was more precious than the ointment of spikenard. He wondered that his Master should accept such an offering. His indignation, partly real, partly affected, was perhaps honestly shared by some of his fellow-disciples, probably by those of the third group, with whom he came most into contact, and of whom we may well think as having a less glowing love, and narrower sympathies than the others.

(9) **This ointment might have been sold for much.**—St. Mark and St. John agree in giving the Traitor's computation. It might have been sold for three hundred *denarii*, a labourer's wages for nearly a whole year (chap. xx. 2), enough to feed a multitude of more than 7,500 men (John vi. 7). St. John adds the damning fact that the pretended zeal for the poor was the cloak for the irritation of disappointed greed. "He was a thief, and bare the bag." He was, *i.e.*, the treasurer or bursar of the travelling company, received the offerings of the wealthier disciples, and disbursed them either on their necessary expenditure or in alms to the poor (see Notes on John xii. 6 and xiii. 29). This was the "one talent" given to him "according to his ability," and in dealing with it he proved fraudulent and faithless.

(10) **Why trouble ye the woman?**—The Greek is more emphatic, "Why are ye giving trouble?" St. Mark uses a word to describe their conduct which explains the verse. "They murmured against her," or better, *They were bitterly reproaching her.* One after another of the murmurers uttered his bitter remonstrances.

**She hath wrought a good work upon me.**—The Greek adjective implies something more than "good"—a *noble*, an *honourable* work. The Lord Jesus, in His sympathy with all human affections, recognises the love that is lavish in its personal devotion as noble and excellent in itself. After His departure, as the teaching of chap. xxv. 40 reminds us, the poor are His chosen representatives, and our offerings to Him are best made through them. How far the words sanction, as they are often urged as sanctioning, a lavish expenditure on the æsthetic element of worship, church architecture, ornamentation, and the like, is a question to which it may be well to find an answer. And the leading lines of thought are, (1) that if the motive be love, and not ostentation, He will recognise it, even if it is misdirected; (2) that so far as ostentation, or the wish to gratify our own taste and sense of beauty, enters into it, it is vitiated from the beginning; (3) that the wants of the poor have a prior claim before that gratification. On the other hand, we must remember (1) that the poor have spiritual wants as well as physical; (2) that all well-directed church-building and decoration minister to those wants, and, even in its accessories of hath wrought a good work upon me. (11) For ye have the poor always with you;[a] but me ye have not always. (12) For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did *it* for my burial. (13) Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her. (14) Then one of the twelve,[b] called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, (15) and said *unto them,* What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. (16) And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

(17) Now the first *day* of the *feast of* unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus,[c] saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? (18) And he said, Go into

[a] Deut. 15. 11.

[c] Mark 14. 12; Luke 22. 7.

[b] Mark 14. 10; Luke 22. 3.

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form and colour, give to the poor a joy which is in itself an element of culture, and may minister to their religious life by making worship a delight. It is a work of charity thus to lighten up lives that are otherwise dull and dreary, and the true law to guide our conscience in such matters is to place our noblest churches in the districts where the people are the poorest.

(11) **Ye have the poor always with you.**—Our Lord dealt with the objection of the murmurers on their own ground, as if it were genuine, and does not openly rebuke the dishonesty of the chief objector. But look and tone, and the solemn pathos of the words, "Me ye have not always," must have made the Traitor feel that he was in the presence of One who read the secrets of his heart.

(12) **She did it for my burial.**—The words must have fallen with a strange sadness upon the ears of the disciples and the other guests. They were expecting that "the kingdom of God should immediately appear" (Luke xix. 11), and were looking forward to the dawn of the next day as the hour of its victory and triumph. The enthusiasm of the moment made them deaf to the real import of what they heard, and their Master, alone of all that company, knew that the fragrance of that perfume would not have died away when His body should be laid in the sepulchre.

(13) **Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached.**—The prediction tended, of course assuming the extension of the gospel, to bring about its own fulfilment, but the prevision at such a moment of that universal extension may well take its place among the proofs of a foreknowledge not less than divine. Others saw victory only, and that immediate; He saw condemnation and shame and death, yet not these only, but through them a victory and dominion over the souls of men beyond their wildest dreams.

(14) **Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot.**—The narrative of St. John leads us, as has been said, to connect the act of treachery with the fact just recorded. There was the shame, and therefore the anger, of detected guilt; there was the greed of gain that had been robbed of its expected spoil, and thirsted for compensation. The purpose that had been formed by the priests and scribes after the resurrection of Lazarus (John xi. 47) may well have become known, and have suggested the hope of a reward. All these feelings were gathering strength through the three days that followed. Possibly there mingled with them a sense of disappointment that the kingly entry into Jerusalem was not followed up by immediate victory. St. Luke's words, that "Satan entered into Judas" (xxii. 3), are remarkable (1) as implying the personal influence of the Tempter; (2) as indicating the fiendish tenacity with which he followed out his purpose; (3) as coinciding with what St. John (xiii. 27) relates at a later stage of his guilt. Nor can we forget that, even at an earlier period of his discipleship, our Lord had used words which spoke of the "devil-nature" that was already working in his soul (John vi. 70).

(15) **They covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.**—The reward was relatively a small one, apparently about the market-price of a common slave (Zech. xi. 12); but the chief priests (Caiaphas and his fellows) saw through the sordid baseness of the man, and, as if scorning both his Master and himself, gauged their reward accordingly.

(17) **The first day of the feast of unleavened bread.**—St. Mark and St. Luke, as writing for Gentile readers, add the explanation that it was then that the Passover was to be slain. The precision with which all the first three Gospels emphasise the fact leaves no room for doubt that they looked on the Last Supper as the celebration of the actual Paschal Feast. St. John's narrative, as has been said, leaves *primâ facie* a different impression.

**Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?**—Our Lord had passed each night since His entry at Bethany (probably in the house of Lazarus or Simon the leper), or in the garden of Gethsemane (John xviii. 1), but the Paschal lamb was to be slain and eaten in Jerusalem, and therefore special preparations were needed. Once before, and probably once only (John ii. 13), had the disciples kept that feast with Him in the Holy City. Were they expecting, as they asked the question, that this feast was to be the chosen and, as it might well seem, appropriate time for the victorious manifestation of the Kingdom? We learn from St. Luke (xxii. 7) that the two who were sent were Peter and John.

(18) **To such a man.**—The Greek word is that used when the writer knows, but does not care to mention, the name of the man referred to. St. Mark and St. Luke relate the sign that was given them. They were to meet a man "bearing a pitcher of water" and follow him, and were to see in the house into which he entered that in which they were to make their preparations. The master of the house was probably a disciple, but secretly, like many others, "for fear of the Jews" (John xii. 42), and this may explain the suppression of his name. He was, at any rate, one who would acknowledge the authority of the Master in whose name the disciples spoke. In the other two Gospels our Lord describes the large upper room furnished which the disciples would find on entering. The signal may have been agreed upon before, or may have been the result of a supernatural prescience. Scripture is silent, and either supposition is legitimate.

**My time is at hand.**—For the disciples, the "time" may have seemed the long-expected season of His manifesting Himself as King, and the memory of such the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples. (19) And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover. (20) Now when the even was come,[a] he sat down with the twelve. (21) And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. (22) And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? (23) And he answered and said, He that dippeth *his* hand with me in the dish,[b] the same shall betray me. (24) The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. (25) Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

[a] Mark 14. 18; Luke 22. 14; John 13. 21.

[b] Ps. 41. 9.

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words as those of John vii. 8 ("My time is not yet full come") may have seemed to strengthen the impression. We read, as it were, between the lines, and see that it was the "time" of the suffering and death which were the conditions of His true glory (John xii. 23; xiii. 32).

(19) **They made ready the passover.**—It may be well to bring together the facts which these few words imply. The two disciples, after seeing that the room was "furnished," the tables arranged, probably in the form of a Roman *triclinium,* and the benches covered with cushions, would have to purchase the lamb, the unleavened bread, and the bitter herbs, together with the wine and the conserve of sweet fruits which later practice had added to the older ritual. The Paschal victim would have to be slain in the courts of the Temple by one of the officiating priests. The lamb so slain would then be roasted, the bitter herbs prepared, and the table set out, and then, as sunset drew near, all would be ready for the Master and His disciples, who formed, on this occasion, the household which were to partake of the Paschal Supper.

(20) **He sat down with the twelve.**—Reserving special Notes for the Gospels which contain the narratives, we may call to mind here the words of strong emotion with which the feast was opened (Luke xxii. 15), the dispute among the disciples, probably connected with the places which they were to occupy at the table (Luke xxii. 24), and our Lord's practical reproof of that dispute in washing His disciples' feet (John xiii. 1—11). Picturing the scene to ourselves, we may think of our Lord as reclining—not sitting—in the centre of the middle table, St. John next to Him, and leaning on His bosom (John xiii. 23), St. Peter probably on the other side, and the others sitting in an order corresponding, more or less closely, with the three-fold division of the Twelve into groups of four. Upon the washing of the feet followed the teaching of John xiii. 12—20, and then came the "blessing" or "thanksgiving" which opened the meal. This went on in silence, while the countenance of the Master betrayed the deep emotion which troubled His spirit (John xiii. 21), and then the silence was broken by the awful words which are recorded in the next verse.

(21) **One of you shall betray me.**—The words would seem to have been intentionally vague, as if to rouse some of those who heard them to self-questioning. They had not, it is true, shared in the very guilt of the Traitor, but they had yielded to tendencies which they had in common with him, and which were dragging them down to his level. They had joined him in his murmuring (verse 8), they had been quarrelling, and were about to renew their quarrel, about precedence (Mark ix. 34, Luke xxii. 24). It was well that the abyss should be laid bare before their eyes, and that each should ask himself whether he were indeed on the point of falling into it.

(22) **They were exceeding sorrowful.**—St. John (xiii. 22) describes their perplexed and questioning glances at each other, the whisper of Peter to John, the answer of our Lord to the beloved disciple, announcing the sign by which the traitor was to be indicated. All this passed apparently as a by-play, unheard or unheeded by the other disciples. It was followed by the hands of the Master and the Traitor meeting in the dish (probably that which contained the conserve of fruit above referred to); and dipping a piece of the unleavened bread in the syrup, the One gave it to the other. The signal was, of course, understood by Peter and John, but probably not by the others.

(23) **He that dippeth his hand with me.**—Better, *he that dipped,* as of an act just passed. It seems probable from what follows that these words also were spoken to a few only of the disciples, say to the four who were nearest to their Master. We can scarcely think of Judas as asking the question of verse 25, if he had heard the words and knew that they pointed to him as the traitor.

(24) **The Son of man goeth as it is written.**—The words are remarkable as the first direct reference of the coming passion and death to the Scriptures which prophesied of the Messiah. It was appointed that the Christ should suffer, but that appointment did not make men less free agents, nor diminish the guilt of treachery or injustice. So, in like manner, as if taught by his Master, St. Peter speaks of the guilt of Judas in Acts i. 16—18, and of that of the priests and scribes in Acts iv. 27, 28.

**It had been good for that man . . .**—Awful as the words were, they have their bright as well as their dark side. According to the estimate which men commonly form, the words are true of all except those who depart this life in the fear and faith of God. In His applying them to the case of the Traitor in its exceptional enormity, there is suggested the thought that for others, whose guilt was not like his, existence even in the penal suffering which their sins have brought on them may be better than never to have been at all.

(25) **Then Judas, which betrayed him . .**—The words appear to have been spoken in the spirit of reckless defiance, which St. John indicates by saying that "after the sop Satan entered into him" (xiii. 27). Did his Master (he calls Him by the wonted title of honour, Rabbi) indeed know his guilt? It would appear from St. John's narrative (xiii. 29) that the dread answer, "Thou hast said," was not heard by all. All that they did hear was the command, "What thou doest, do

(26) And as they were eating, Jesus took bread,[a] and blessed *it*,[1] and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. (27) And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; (28) for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for

[a] 1 Cor. 11. 24.
[1] Many Greek copies have, *gave thanks*.

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quickly;" and some at least, probably the rest who were not in the secret of the signal, thought that that command referred to some matter connected with his customary work as the bursar of the company. He was to buy what was needed for the feast (*i.e.*, probably, the customary solemn meal, or *Chagigah*, of the day that followed on the Paschal Supper), or to give alms to the poor. He, however, understood the meaning of the words, and straightway went out (John xiii. 27—30). It follows, from this view of the sequence of events, that though he had eaten bread with his Master, he did not partake of the bread and the cup that were to be the signs of the New Covenant. At this stage St. John inserts the words as to the new commandment, "that ye should love another," which was embodied in that act of fellowship.

(26) **As they were eating.**—Again we must represent to ourselves an interval of silence, broken by the act or words that followed. The usual "grace" or blessing had been spoken at the beginning of the feast. Now, taking one of the cakes of unleavened bread, He again utters a solemn formula of blessing, and gives it to them with the words, "Take, eat, this is my body;" or, as in St. Luke's fuller report (xxii. 19; comp. also 1 Cor. xi. 24), "This is My body that is given for you" (literally, *that is in the act of being given*); "do this in remembrance of Me" (better, *as a memorial of Me*). It would be an endless and profitless task to enter into the labyrinth of subtle speculations to which these words have given rise. Did the bread which He thus gave them contain at that moment the substance of His body, taking the place of its own substance or united with it? In what way is He present when those words are repeated and the faithful receive the "sacrament of the body and blood of Christ?" Questions such as these, theories of Transubstantiation, Consubstantiation, and the like, are, we may venture to say, alien to the mind of Christ, and outside the range of any true interpretation. As pointing to the true path through that labyrinth, it will be enough to remember (1) that our Lord's later teaching had accustomed the disciples to language of like figurative boldness. He was "the door of the sheep-fold" (John x. 7). What they would understand at the time and afterwards was, that He spoke of His body as being as truly given for them as that bread which He had broken was given to them. (2) That the words could scarcely fail to recall what had once seemed a "hard saying which they could not hear" (John vi. 60). They had been told that they could only enter into eternal life by eating His flesh and drinking His blood—*i.e.*, by sharing His life, and the spirit of sacrifice which led Him to offer it up for the life of the world. Now they were taught that what had appeared impossible was to become possible, through the outward symbol of the bread thus broken. They were to "do this" as a memorial of Him, and so to keep fresh in their remembrance that sacrifice which He had offered. To see in these words, as some have seen, the command, "Offer this as a sacrifice," is to do violence to their natural meaning by reading into them the after-thoughts of theology. (See Notes on Luke xxii. 19.) But, on the other hand, the word rendered "remembrance" or "memorial" was one not without a sacrificial aspect of its own. Every "sacrifice" was a "remembrance" of man's sins (Heb. x. 3). Every Paschal Feast was a "memorial" of the first great Passover (Ex. xii. 9; Num. x. 10). So every act such as He now commanded would be a "memorial" at once of the sins which made a sacrifice necessary, and of the one great sacrifice which He had offered. (3) It seems something like a descent to a lower region of thought, but it ought to be noted that the time at which the memorial was thus instituted, "while they were eating," is not without its significance in the controversies which have been raised as to fasting or non-fasting communion. Rules on such a subject, so far as any Church adopts them, or any individual Christian finds them expedient, may have their authority and their value, but the facts of the original institution witness that they rest on no divine authority, and that the Church acts wisely when it leaves the question to every individual Christian to decide as he is "fully persuaded in his own mind" (Rom. xiv. 5).

(27) **He took the cup, and gave thanks.**—The better MSS. omit the article; thus making it, "*a* cup." In the later ritual of the Passover, the cup of wine (or rather, of wine mingled with water) was passed round three times in the course of the supper. One such cup had been passed round early in the evening (Luke xxii. 17); now another becomes, under a solemn consecration, the symbol of a diviner truth than had yet been revealed to the listening and wondering disciples.

(28) **For this is my blood of the new testament.**—Better, *this is My blood of the Covenant;* the best MSS. omitting the word "new" both here and in St. Mark. It was probably introduced into the later MSS. to bring the text into harmony with St. Luke's report. Assuming the word "new" to have been actually spoken by our Lord, we can understand its being passed over by some reporters or transcribers whose attention had not been specially called to the great prophecy of Jer. xxxi. 31—34. That prophecy was, however, certain to have a prominent place in the minds of those who had come into contact, as St. Luke must have done, with the line of thought indicated in the Epistle to the Hebrews (chaps. viii., ix.), and therefore we cannot wonder that we find it in the report of the words given by him (xxii. 20) and by St. Paul (1 Cor. xi. 25). If we were to accept the other alternative, it would still be true that the covenant of which our Lord spoke was *ipso facto* new, and was therefore that of which Jeremiah had spoken, and that the insertion of the word (looking to the general freedom of the Gospels in reporting our Lord's discourses) was a legitimate way of emphasising that fact.

Dealing with the words, we note (1) that the word "covenant" is everywhere (with, possibly, the one exception of Heb. ix. 16, but see Note there) the best equivalent for the Greek word. The popular use of the "New Testament" for the collected writings of the apostolic age, makes its employment here and in the parallel passages singularly infelicitous. (2) That the "blood of the covenant" is obviously a reference to the history of Ex. xxiv. 4—8. The blood which the Son of Man was about to shed was to be to the true Israel of God what the blood which Moses had the remission of sins. (29) But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. (30) And when they had sung an hymn,[1] they went out into the mount of Olives. (31) Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended

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[1] Or, *Psalm.*

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sprinkled on the people had been to the outward Israel. It was the true "blood of sprinkling" (Heb. xii. 24), and Jesus was thus the "Mediator" of the New Covenant as Moses had been of the Old (Gal. iii. 19). (3) That so far as this was, in fact or words, the sign of a new covenant, it turned the thoughts of the disciples to that of which Jeremiah had spoken. The essence of that covenant was to be the inward working of the divine law, which had before been brought before the conscience as an external standard of duty—("I will put My law in their inward parts," Jer. xxxi. 33)—a truer knowledge of God, and through that knowledge the forgiveness of iniquity; and all this, they were told, was to be brought about through the sacrifice of the death of Christ.

**Which is shed for many.**—The participle is, as before, in the present tense—*which is being shed*—the immediate future being presented to them as if it were actually passing before their eyes. As in chap. xx. 28, our Lord uses the indefinite "for many," as equivalent to the universal "for all." St. Paul's language in 1 Tim. ii. 6 shows, beyond the shadow of a doubt, how the words "for many" had been interpreted.

**For the remission of sins.**—This had been from the outset the substance of the gospel which our Lord had preached, both to the people collectively (Luke iv. 16—19) and to individual souls (chap. ix. 2; Luke vii. 48). What was new in the words now was this connection with the shedding of His blood as that which was instrumental in obtaining the forgiveness. Returning, with the thoughts thus brought together, to the command of verse 27, "Drink ye all of it," we may see, as before in the case of the bread, an allusive reference to the mysterious words of John vi. 53, 54. In the contrast between the "sprinkling" of Ex. xxiv. 6 and the "drinking" here enjoined, we may legitimately see a symbol, not only of the participation of believers in the life of Christ, as represented by the blood, but also of the difference between the outward character of the Old Covenant and the inward nature of the New. It is, perhaps, not altogether outside the range of associations thus suggested to note that to drink together of a cup filled with human blood had come to be regarded as a kind of sacrament of closest and perpetual union, and as such was chosen by evildoers—as in the case of Catiline (Sallust, *Catil.* c. 22)—to bind their partners in guilt more closely to themselves. The cup which our Lord gave His disciples, though filled with wine, was to be to them the pledge of a union in holiness as deep and true as that which bound others in a league of evil.

We cannot pass, however, from these words without dwelling for a moment on their evidential aspect. For eighteen centuries—without, so far as we can trace, any interruption, even for a single week—the Christian Church, in all its manifold divisions, under every conceivable variety of form and ritual, has had its meetings to break bread and to drink wine, not as a social feast (from a very early date, if not from the beginning, the limited quantity of bread and wine must have excluded that idea), but as a commemorative act. It has referred its observance to the command thus recorded, and no other explanation has ever been suggested. But this being granted, we have in our Lord's words, at the very time when He had spoken of the guilt of the Traitor and His own approaching death, the proof of a divine prescience. He knew that His true work was beginning and not ending; that He was giving a commandment that would last to the end of time; that He had obtained a greater honour than Moses, and was the Mediator of a better covenant (Heb iii. 3; viii. 6).

(29) **I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine.**—Literally, *product of the vine.* It would be better, perhaps, to translate, *I shall not drink,* as implying the acceptance of what had been ordained by God rather than an act of volition. The words carry us into a region of mystic symbolism. Never afterwards while He tarried upon earth was He to taste of the wine-cup with His disciples. But in the kingdom of God, completed and perfected, He would be with them once again, and then Master and disciples would be alike sharers in that joy in the Holy Ghost, of which wine—new wine—was the appropriate symbol. The language of Prov. ix. 2 and Isa. xxv. 6, helps us to enter into the meaning of the words. Even the mocking taunt of the multitude on the day of Pentecost, "These men are full of new wine" (Acts ii. 13), may have recalled the mysterious promise to the minds of the Apostles, and enabled them to comprehend that it was through the gift of the Spirit that they were entering, in part at least, even then, into the joy of their Lord.

(30) **And when they had sung an hymn.**—This close of the supper would seem to coincide (but the work of the harmonist is not an easy one here) with the "Rise, let us go hence" of John xiv. 31, and, if so, we have to think of the conversation in John xiv. as either coming between the departure of Judas and the institution of the Lord's Supper, or else between that institution and the concluding hymn. This was probably the received Paschal series of Psalms (cxv. to cxviii., inclusive), and the word implies a chant or musical recitative. Psalms cxiii., cxiv., were sung commonly during the meal. The Greek word may mean "when they had sung their hymn," as of something known and definite.

**They went out into the mount of Olives.**—We must think of the breaking up of the Paschal company; of the fear and forebodings which pressed upon the minds of all, as they left the chamber and made their way, under the cold moonlight, through the streets of Jerusalem, down to the valley of the Kidron and up the western slope of Olivet. St. Luke records that His disciples followed Him, some near, some, it may be, afar off. The discourses reported in John xv., xvi., xvii., which must be assigned to this period in the evening, seem to imply a halt from time to time, during which the Master poured forth His heart to His disciples, or uttered intercessions for them. St. John, who had "lain in His bosom" at the supper, would naturally be nearest to Him now, and this may, in part at least, explain how it was that so full a report of all that was thus spoken appears in his Gospel, and in that only.

(31) **All ye shall be offended because of me.**—We may think of the words as spoken at some early stage of that evening walk. It corresponds in substance with John xvi. 32, but seems to have been uttered more abruptly.

because of me this night:[a] for it is written, I will smite the shepherd,[b] and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. (32) But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.[c] (33) Peter answered and said unto him, Though all *men* shall be offended because of thee, *yet* will I never be offended. (34) Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee,[d] That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. (35) Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

(36) Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane,[e] and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. (37) And he took with him Peter and the two

[a] Mark 14. 27: John 16. 32.
[b] Zech. 13. 7.
[c] Mark 14. 28; & 16. 7.
[d] John 13. 38.
[e] Mark 14. 32; Luke 22. 39.

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**I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered.**—The citation of this prophecy, from Zech. xiii. 7. is every way suggestive, as showing that our Lord's thoughts had dwelt, and that He led the disciples to dwell, on that chapter as applicable to Himself. To one who dealt with prophecy as St. Matthew dealt with it, much in that chapter that is perplexing to the historical critic would be full of divinest meaning. It told of a "fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness;" of One with "wounds" in His hands, who was "wounded in the house of His friends;" of the Shepherd to whom Jehovah spake as to His "fellow."

(32) **After I am risen.**—Our Lord referred to these His words afterwards (xxviii. 16), but they appear to have fallen at the time unheeded on the ears of the disciples, and to have been rapidly forgotten. No expectation of a resurrection is traceable in their after conduct.

(33) **Though all men shall be offended.**—St. Matthew and St. Mark place the boast of Peter, and the prediction of his denial, after the disciples had left the guest-chamber; St. Luke (xxii. 23) and St. John (xiii. 37) agree in placing it before. It is barely possible that both may have been repeated, but the more probable hypothesis is, that we have here an example of the natural dislocation of the exact order of events that followed one upon another in rapid sequence, and at a time when men's minds were heavy with confused sorrow.

(34) **Thou shalt deny me thrice.**—The agreement of all the four Evangelists places the fact of the prediction beyond the shadow of a doubt, and the prevision which it implies is obviously more than a general insight into the instability of the disciple's character, and involves a power essentially superhuman. We must not forget what the disciple could not fail to remember, that to the sin thus foretold was attached the penalty, that he who was guilty of it should be "denied before the angels of God" (Luke xii. 9). That was the law of retribution, but as with all such laws, the penalty might be averted by repentance.

(35) **Though I should die with thee.**—Though foremost in announcing the resolve, Peter was not alone in it. Thomas had spoken like words before (John xi. 16), and all felt as if they were prepared to face death for their Master's sake. To them He had been not only "righteous," but "good" and kind, and therefore for Him "they even dared to die." (Comp. Rom. v. 7.)

(36) **Then cometh Jesus . . .**—In the interval between verses 35, 36, we have probably to place the discourses in John xv. (the reference to the vine, probably suggested by one which was putting forth its leaves in the early spring), xvi., and the great prayer of intercession in xvii. As St. John alone has recorded them, it is probable that he alone entered into their meaning, while others either did not hear them, or listened to them as above their reach, and asked their child-like questions (xvi. 18—19, 29—30). St. Luke records what we may look on as the germ of the great intercession, in our Lord's words to Peter, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not" (Luke xxii. 32).

**A place called Gethsemane.**—The word means "oil-press," and was obviously connected with the culture of the trees from which the Mount took its name. St. John's description implies that it was but a little way beyond the brook Kidron (xviii. 1), on the lower western slope of the mount. There was a garden (or rather, *orchard*) there which was the wonted resort of our Lord and the disciples when they sought retirement. The olive-trees now growing in the place shown as Gethsemane, venerable as their age is, can hardly have been those that then grew there, as Josephus expressly records that Titus ordered all the trees in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem to be cut down, and the Tenth Legion was actually encamped on the Mount of Olives (Jos. *Wars*, v. 2, § 3). They probably represent the devotion of pilgrims of the fourth or some later century, who replanted the hallowed site.

**Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.**—Partly in compassion to the weakness and weariness of the disciples, partly from the sense of the need of solitude in the highest acts of communing with His Father, the Son of Man withdraws for a little while from converse with those whom, up to this time, He had been strengthening. He had been (as in John xvii.) praying for them; He now needs to pray for Himself.

(37) **He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee.**—The favoured three, as before at the Transfiguration, and in the death-chamber in the house of Jairus (xvii. 1; Mark v. 37), were chosen out of the chosen. Their professions of devotion justified, as it were, the belief that they, at least, could "watch and pray" with Him. The nearness and sympathy of friends were precious even when personal solitude was felt to be a necessity.

**And began to be sorrowful and very heavy.**—The Greek word for the latter verb occurs only here, in the parallel passage of Mark xiv. 33, and Phil. ii. 26, where it is translated "full of heaviness." Its primary meaning is thought by some philologists to have been that of "satiety," hence, "loathing" and "ill at ease." Others, however, find its root-thought in being "far from home," and so weary and perplexed. There is, it is obvious, a mysterious contrast between the calm, triumphant serenity which had shone in the look and tone of the Son of Man up to this point, and had reached its highest point in the prayer of John xvii., and the anguish and distress that were now apparent. The change has, however, its manifold analogies in the experience of those who are nearest to their Master in sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. (38) Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. (39) And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou *wilt*. (40) And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? (41) Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak. (42) He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. (43) And he came and

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sufferings and character. They, too, know how suddenly they may pass from confidence and joy as to a horror of great darkness. And in His sufferings we must remember there was an element absolutely unique. It was His to "tread the wine-press" alone (Isa. lxiii. 3). It was not only, as it might be with other martyrs, the natural shrinking of man's nature from pain and death, nor yet the pain of finding treachery and want of true devotion where there had been the promise of faithfulness. The intensity of His sympathy at that moment made the sufferings and sins of mankind His own, and the burden of those sins weighed upon His soul as greater than He could bear (Isa. liii. 4—6).

(38) **Exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.**—The infinite sadness of that hour leads the Master to crave for sympathy from the three who were, most of all, His brothers. If they may not see, or fully hear, the throes of that agony, as though the pangs of death had already fallen on Him, it will be something to know that they are at least watching with Him, sharers in that awful vigil.

(39) **He went a little farther.**—St. Luke adds (xxii. 41) "about a stone's cast." The eight were left, we may believe, near the entrance of the garden; the three, "apart by themselves," further on; the Master, still further, by Himself. The three heard the words that came from His lips as with a half-consciousness which revived afterwards in memory, but they were then numbed and stupefied with weariness and sorrow. It was now near the dawning of the day, and their eyes had not closed in sleep for four-and-twenty hours.

**If it be possible, let this cup pass from me.**—We shrink instinctively from analysing or commenting on the utterances of that hour of agony. But, happily, words are given us where our own words fail. Thus it was, we are told, that "He learned obedience by the things that He suffered" (Heb. v. 8). He had spoken before to the very disciples who were now near Him of the "cup" which His Father had given Him to drink (xx. 23). Now the "cup" is brought to His lips, and His human will at once shrinks from it and accepts it. The prayer which He had taught His disciples to use, "Lead us not into temptation," is now His prayer, but it is subordinated to that other prayer, which is higher even than it, "Thy will be done." In the prayer "If it be possible" we recognise, as in Mark xiii. 32, the natural, necessary limits of our Lord's humanity. In one sense "with God all things are possible," but even the Divine Omnipotence works through self-imposed laws, in the spiritual as in the natural world, and there also ends cannot be obtained except through their appointed and therefore necessary means. God might have redeemed mankind, men have rashly said, without the sufferings and death of the Son of Man, but the higher laws of the Divine Government made such a course, if we may venture so to speak, morally impossible.

(40) **He cometh unto the disciples.**—Perhaps to both the groups—first of the three and then of the eight. All were alike sleeping—as St. Luke characteristically adds, "sleeping for sorrow."

**What, could ye not watch . . . ?**—Literally, *Were ye thus unable to watch?* St. Mark (xiv. 37) individualises the words—"Simon, sleepest thou?" He had boasted of his readiness to do great things. He could not so much as rouse himself to watch for one hour. The last word may be fairly taken as partly measuring the time that had passed since their Master had left them. As the words are reported we must believe that the disciples were just so far roused as to hear them, and that they sank back powerless into slumber.

(41) **Watch and pray.**—The first word is eminently characteristic of our Lord's teaching at this period (xxiv. 42; xxv. 13). It became the watchword of the early disciples (1 Cor. xvi. 13; Col. iv. 2; 1 Thess. v. 6; 1 Pet. v. 8). It left its mark in the history of Christendom in the new names of Gregory, and Vigilius, or Vigilantius, "the watcher."

**That ye enter not into temptation**—*i.e.*, as in the Lord's Prayer, to which our Lord manifestly recalls the minds of the disciples—the *trial* of coming danger and persecution. In their present weakness that trial might prove greater than they could bear, and therefore they were to watch and pray, *in order that* they might not pass by negligence into too close contact with its power.

**The spirit indeed is willing.**—Better, *ready*, or *eager*. There is a tenderness in the warning which is very noticeable. The Master recognises the element of good, their readiness to go with Him to prison or to death, in their higher nature. But the spirit and the flesh were contrary the one to the other (Gal. v. 17); and therefore they could not do the things that they would, without a higher strength than their own.

(42) **If this cup may not pass away from me.**—There is a slight change of tone perceptible in this prayer as compared with the first. It is, to speak after the manner of men, as though the conviction that it was not possible that the cup could pass away from Him had come with fuller clearness before His mind, and He was learning to accept it. He finds the answer to the former prayer in the continuance, not the removal, of the bitter agony that preyed on His spirit. It is probably at this stage of the trial that we are to place the sweat like "great drops of blood" and the vision of the angel of Luke xxii. 43, 44.

(43) **He came and found them asleep again.**—The motive of this return we may reverently believe to have been, as before, the craving for human sympathy in that hour of awful agony. He does not now rouse them or speak to them. He looks on them sorrowfully, and they meet His gaze with bewildered and stupefied astonishment. "They wist not what to answer Him" (Mark xiv. 40).

found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. (44) And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. (45) Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. (46) Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

(47) And while he yet spake,[a] lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. (48) Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. (49) And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. (50) And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him. (51) And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out *his* hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. (52) Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all

[a] Mark 14. 43; Luke 22. 47; John 18.3.

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(44) **Saying the same words.**—The fact is suggestive, as indicating that there is a repetition in prayer which indicates not formalism, but intensity of feeling. Lower forms of sorrow may, as it were, play with grief and vary the forms of its expression, but the deepest and sharpest agony is content to fall back upon the iteration of the self-same words.

(45) **Sleep on now, and take your rest.**—There is an obvious difficulty in these words, followed as they are so immediately by the "Rise, let us be going," of the next verse. We might, at first, be inclined to see in them a shade of implied reproach. "Sleep on now, if sleep under such conditions is possible; make the most of the short interval that remains before the hour of the betrayal comes." Something of this kind seems obviously implied, but the sudden change is, perhaps, best explained by the supposition that it was not till after these words had been spoken that the Traitor and his companions were seen actually approaching, and that it was this that led to the words seemingly so different in their purport, bidding the slumberers to rouse themselves from sleep. The past, which, as far as their trial went, might have been given to sleep, was over. A new crisis had come calling for action.

(46) **Rise, let us be going.**—It is obvious that the latter clause does not involve any suggestion of flight, but rather a call to confront the danger.

(47) **A great multitude with swords and staves.**—St. John's account (xviii. 3) is fuller. The multitude included (1) the band (not "*a* band," as in the Authorised version), *i.e.*, the cohort (the same word as in Acts. x. 1) of Roman soldiers sent by Pilate to prevent a tumult. These probably were armed with swords; (2) the officers of the chief-priests, probably the Levites or Nethinim, who were the guards of the Temple, armed with "staves" or "clubs." He adds, also, what lay in the nature of the case, that they were provided with "lanterns and torches" as well as weapons. It was now near the hour of dawn, but they must have left the city while there was at best only moonlight to guide them. They bent their steps to Gethsemane, as that was known to Judas as one at least of our Lord's chosen resorts (John xviii. 2), in which, we may well believe, He had spent some hours of each of the four preceding nights.

(48) **Whomsoever I shall kiss.**—It is probable, from the known customs (1) of the Jews and (2) of the early Christians (Rom. xvi. 16; 1 Thess. v. 26) that this was the usual salutation of the disciples to their Master. St. John, it may be noted, makes no mention of the sign; probably because here, as elsewhere, he seeks to give touches that others had passed over, rather than to repeat what the oral or written teaching of the Church had already made familiar.

(49) **Hail, master.**—Better, *Rabbi*, both St. Matthew and St. Mark (xiv. 45) giving the Hebrew word. The Greek word for "hail" is somewhat more familiar than the English has come to be for us. It was, we may believe, the disciples' usual greeting.

(50) **Friend, wherefore art thou come?**—The word is the same as in Matt. xx. 13, xxii. 12; and "comrade," and the old and not yet obsolete English "mate," come nearer to its meaning. In classical Greek it was used by fellow-soldiers, or sailors, of each other. Socrates used it in conversing with his scholars (Plato, *Repub.* i., p. 334). It is probably immediately after the kiss had thus been given that we must insert the short dialogue between our Lord and the officers recorded in John xviii. 2—8.

(51) **One of them which were with Jesus.**—It is remarkable that, though all four Gospels record the fact, St. John alone (xviii. 10, 11) records the names both of the disciple who struck the blow (Peter) and of the servant whom he attacked. The reticence of the first three Gospels in this instance, as in that of the woman with the box of ointment, must have been obviously intentional; but it is not easy to conjecture its motive.

**Drew his sword.**—We learn from Luke xxii. 33 that there were but two swords in the whole company of the twelve. One of these naturally was in Peter's possession, as being the foremost of the whole band.

**A servant of the high priest's.**—St. John (xviii. 11) with the precision characteristic of his narrative, especially in this part of the Gospel history, gives the servant's name as Malchus, and states that it was the right ear that was cut off. He came, it would seem, not as one of the officers of the Temple, but as the personal slave of Caiaphas. Three of the four Gospels use the diminutive form of the Greek for "ear," St. Luke only (xxii. 50) giving the primitive word. It is doubtful, however, whether the former was used with any special significance. St. Luke also (xxii. 51) alone records the fact that our Lord touched and healed the wound thus made.

(52) **All they that take the sword.**—St. Matthew's record is here the fullest. St. Mark reports none of the words; St. Luke (xxii. 51) gives only the calming utterance, "Suffer ye thus far;" St. John (xviii. 11) adds to the command to put the sword into its sheath the words, "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" a manifest echo of the

they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.[a] (53) Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? (54) But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?[b] (55) In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. (56) But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.[c] Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

(57) And they that had laid hold on Jesus led *him* away to Caiaphas the high priest,[d] where the scribes and the elders were assembled. (58) But Peter

[a] Gen. 9. 6; Rev 13. 10.

[c] Lam. 4. 20.

[b] Isa. 53. 10.

[d] Mark 14. 53: Luke 22. 54: John 18. 13.

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prayer that had been uttered before in the hour of His agony. The words which St. Matthew gives are obviously not a general rule declaring the unlawfulness of all warfare, offensive or defensive, but are limited in their range by the occasion. Resistance at that time would have involved certain destruction. More than that, it would have been fighting not for God, but against Him, because against the fulfilment of His purpose. It is, however, a natural inference from the words to see in them a warning applicable to all analogous occasions. In whatever other cause it may be lawful to use carnal weapons, it is not wise or right to draw the sword for Christ and His Truth. (Comp. 2 Cor. x. 4.)

(53) **Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray . .?**—There is a strange and suggestive blending of the possible and the impossible in these words. Could He have brought Himself to utter that prayer, it would have been answered. But He could not so pray unless He knew it to be in harmony with His Father's will, and He had been taught, in that hour of agony, that it was not in harmony, and therefore He would not utter it.

**Presently.**—The modern English reader needs to be reminded once more that the word means *immediately*, without a moment's delay.

**Twelve legions.**—The number is probably suggested by that of the Apostles. Not twelve weak men, one a traitor and the others timorous, but twelve legions of the armies of the Lord of Hosts. Note the Roman word appearing here, as in Mark. v. 9, 15, as the representative of warlike might.

(54) **How then shall the scriptures be fulfilled?**—The words indicate what one may reverently speak of as the source of the peace and calmness which had come to our Lord's human soul out of the depths of its agony. All that was sharpest and most bitter was part of a pre-ordained discipline. Not otherwise could the Scriptures be fulfilled, which had painted, if we may so speak, the picture of the ideal Sufferer not less vividly than that of the ideal Conqueror and King. It was meet that He too should be made perfect through sufferings (Heb. ii. 10).

(55) **Are ye come out as against a thief?**—Better, *as against a robber with swords and clubs.* The word is the same as that used in John xviii. 40, of Barabbas, and points to the brigand chieftain of a lawless band as distinct from the petty thief of towns or villages.

**I sat daily with you teaching in the temple.**—The statement referred primarily, perhaps, to what had passed in the three days immediately preceding, but it looks beyond this in its wide generality, and is important as an indication, occurring in one of the first three Gospels, of a ministry in Jerusalem, which their narratives pass over. The "sitting" in the Temple implied that our Lord took the position of a teacher more or less recognised as such (comp. Note on Matt. v. 1), not that of one who was addressing the multitude without authority.

(56) **But all this was done.**—Better, *but all this has come to pass.* The words, though they agree in form with those of i. 22, are, as we see from Mark xiv. 49, not a comment of the Evangelist's, but our Lord's own witness to the disciples and the multitude, that the treachery and violence of which He was the victim were all working out a divine purpose, and (as in verse 54) fulfilling the Scriptures in which that purpose had been shadowed forth.

**Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.**—We read with a sorrowful surprise of this cowardly abandonment. Better things, we think, might have been expected of those who had professed their readiness to go with Him to prison and to death. Yet we may remember (1) the weariness and exhaustion which had overcome them, making the resolve and courage, to say the least, more difficult; and (2) that they had been told not to resist, and that flight might seem to them the only alternative to resistance. We have to fill up St. Matthew's record with the strange episode of the "young man with a linen cloth cast about his naked body" of Mark xvi. 51, where see Note.

(57) **To Caiaphas the high priest.**—St. John alone, probably from the special facilities which he possessed as known to the high priest, records the preliminary examination before Annas (John xviii. 13, 19—24). It was obviously intended to draw from our Lord's lips something that might serve as the basis of an accusation. Caiaphas, we must remember, had already committed himself to the policy of condemnation (John xi. 49, 50). The whole history that follows leaves the impression that the plans of the priests had been hastened by the treachery of Judas.

**Where the scribes and the elders were assembled.**—It was against the rules of Jewish law to hold a session of the Sanhedrin or Council for the trial of capital offences by night. Such an assembly on the night of the Paschal Supper must have been still more at variance with usage, and the fact that it was so held has, indeed, been urged as a proof that the Last Supper was not properly the Passover. The present gathering was therefore an informal one—probably a packed meeting of those who were parties to the plot, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa, and probably not a few others, like the young "ruler" of Luke xviii. 18, not being summoned. When they had gone through their mock trial, and day was dawning (Luke xxii. 68), they transformed themselves into a formal court, and proceeded to pass judgment.

(58) **Peter followed him afar off.**—We find from St. John's narrative, here much the fullest, that it was through him that Peter found admission. He

followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end. (59) Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; (60) but found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, *yet* found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, (61) and said, This *fellow* said, I am able to destroy the temple of God,[a] and to build it in three days. (62) And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against thee? (63) But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. (64) Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power,[b] and coming in the clouds of heaven. (65) Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold,

[a] John 2. 19.

[b] ch. 16. 27; Rom. 14. 10; 1 Thess. 4. 16.

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sat in the "court" "with the servants" (better, *officers*, as in John xviii. 18) and the slaves, who, in the chill of the early dawn, had lighted a charcoal fire. Female slaves who acted as gate-keepers were passing to and fro. The cold night air had told on the disciple, and he too, weary and chilled, drew near the fire and warmed himself.

**To see the end.**—There is something singularly suggestive in this account of Peter's motive. It was, we may believe, more than a vague curiosity. There was something of sorrowful anxiety, of reverential sorrow, but there was no fervent devotion, no prayer for himself or his Master, only the fevered restlessness of uncertain expectation, and so all the natural instability of his character had free play, with nothing to control it.

(59) **Sought false witness.**—The tense of the Greek verb implies a continued process of seeking. The attempt to draw the materials for condemnation from the lips of the accused had failed. The law of Moses required at least two witnesses (Deut. xvii. 6; xix. 15), and these, it is natural to believe, were examined independently of each other. The haste which marked all the proceedings of the trial had probably prevented previous concert, and the judges could not, for very shame, convict in the face of a glaring discrepancy, probably as to time and place, between the witnesses who thus offered themselves.

(61) **This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God.**—It is remarkable that the two Gospels which record the charge do not record the words in which it had its starting-point. Apparently, the second cleansing of the Temple (chap. xxi. 12) had revived the memory of the first, and brought back to men's minds the words that had then been spoken—"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John ii. 19). What was now reported was a sufficiently natural distortion of what had then been said. St. Mark adds that even then the witnesses did not agree. There were still discrepancies as to time, place, and the exact words, that did not fit in with the established rules of evidence.

(62) **Answerest thou nothing?**—A different punctuation gives, *Answerest Thou nothing to what these witness against Thee?* as one question. The question implies a long-continued silence, while witness after witness were uttering their clumsy falsehoods, the effect of which it is not easy to realise without a more than common exercise of what may be called dramatic imagination. I remember hearing from a distinguished scholar who had seen the Ammergau Passion-mystery, that, as represented there, it came upon him with a force which he had never felt before. In the silence itself we may perhaps trace a deliberate fulfilment of the prophecy of Isa. liii. 7. In 1 Pet. ii. 23 we find a record of the impression which that fulfilment made on the disciples.

**What is it . . . ?**—The question was clearly put, as it had been before Annas (John. xviii. 19), with the intention of drawing out something that would ensure condemnation.

(63) **I adjure thee by the living God . . .**—The appeal was one of unusual solemnity. All else had failed to break through the silence, but this would surely rouse Him. Technically, the oath thus tendered to the accused was of the nature of an oath of compurgation, such as that recognised in Ex. xxii. 11, Num. v. 19—22, 1 Kings viii. 31, but it was skilfully worded so as to force upon our Lord the alternative either of denying what indeed He was, or of making a confession which would be treated as blasphemy. The records of St. John's Gospel (John v. 18; viii. 58; ix. 37; x. 24) show us that they had good means of knowing what answer to expect.

(64) **Thou hast said.**—The silence was broken as they expected. He was indeed what the words they had uttered implied. More than this, He was also the Son of Man of Daniel's vision (Dan. vii. 13), the Head of an everlasting kingdom. No words in the whole Gospel records are more decisive against the views of those who would fain see in our Lord only a great moral teacher, like Socrates or Cakya Mouni. At the very crisis of His history, when denial would have saved His life, He asserts His claim to be much more than this, to be all that the most devout Christians have ever believed Him to be. At such a moment, when men stand face to face with seeming failure and with death, dreams and delusive claims for the most part melt away. Here claims that men have presumed to think of as delusive were strengthened and intensified, and reproduced as in the calmness of assured conviction.

**The right hand of power.**—The Greek article here can hardly be reproduced in English, but it is well to remember that our Lord speaks of "*the* power," that which belonged pre-eminently to the Eternal.

(65) **Then the high priest rent his clothes.**—The act was almost as much a formal sign of condemnation as the putting on of the black cap by an English judge. The judges in a Jewish trial for blasphemy were bound to rend their clothes in twain when the blasphemous words were uttered, and the clothes so torn were never afterwards to be mended. In Acts xiv. 14 the same act appears, on the part of Paul and Barnabas, as the expression of an impulsive horror, as

now ye have heard his blasphemy. (66) What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. (67) Then did they spit in his face,[a] and buffeted him; and others smote *him* with the palms of their hands,[1] (68) saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?

(69) Now Peter sat without in the palace:[b] and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. (70) But he denied before *them* all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. (71) And when he was gone out into the porch, another *maid* saw him, and said unto them that were there, This *fellow* was also with Jesus of Nazareth. (72) And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. (73) And after a while came unto *him* they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art *one* of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee. (74) Then began he to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. (75) And Peter remem-

[a] Isa. 50. 6.

[1] Or, *rods.*

[b] Mark 14. 66; Luke 22. 55; John 18. 25.

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it had done of old when Eliakim rent his clothes on hearing the blasphemies of Rab-shakeh (2 Kings xviii. 37). A comparison of the Greek word here and in Mark xiv. 63 shows that it included the tunic or under-garment as well as the cloak.

(66) **He is guilty of death.**—In modern English the word "guilty" is almost always followed by the crime which a man has committed. In older use it was followed by the punishment which the man deserved. (Comp. Num. xxxv. 31.) The decision, as far as the meeting went, was unanimous. Sentence was passed. It remained, however, to carry the sentence into effect, and this, while the Roman governor was at Jerusalem, presented a difficulty which had to be met by proceedings of another kind. The Jews, or at least their rulers, who courted the favour of Rome, ostentatiously disclaimed the power of punishing capital offences (John xviii. 31).

(67) **Then did they spit in his face.**—We learn from St. Mark (xiv. 65) and St. Luke (xxii. 63) that these acts of outrage were perpetrated, not by the members of the Sanhedrin, but by the officers who had the accused in their custody, and who, it would seem, availed themselves of the interval between the two meetings of the council to indulge in this wanton cruelty. Here, also, they were unconsciously working out a complete correspondence with Isaiah's picture of the righteous sufferer (Isa. l. 6). The word "buffeted" describes a blow with the clenched fist, as contrasted with one with the open palm.

(68) **Prophesy unto us, thou Christ.**—The words derived their point from the fact recorded by St. Mark (xiv. 65), that the officers had blindfolded their prisoner. Was He able, through His supernatural power, to identify those who smote Him?

(69) **Now Peter sat without in the palace.**—Better, *had sat down in the court.* The word rendered "palace" here and in verse 58, is strictly the court-yard or quadrangle round which a house was built. It may be well to bring together the order of the Apostle's thrice-repeated denials.

(1) On his entry into the court-yard of the palace, in answer to the female slave who kept the door (John xviii. 17).

(2) As he sat by the fire warming himself, in answer (*a*) to another damsel (Matt. xxvi. 69) and (*b*) other by-standers (John xviii. 25; Luke xxii. 58), including (*c*) the kinsman of Malchus (John xviii. 26).

(3) About an hour later (Luke xxii. 59), after he had left the fire, as if to avoid the shower of questions, and had gone out into the porch, or gateway leading out of the court-yard, in answer (*a*) to one of the damsels who had spoken before (Mark xiv. 69; Matt. xxvi. 71), and again (*b*) to other by-standers (Luke xxii. 59; Matt. xxvi. 13; Mark xiv. 20).

There were thus three distinct occasions, but as the hasty words of denial rose to his lips, it is probable enough that they were repeated more than once on each occasion, and that several persons heard them.

As far as we can analyse the impulse which led to the denial, it was probably shame not less than fear. The feeling which had shown itself in the cry, "Be it far from thee, Lord," when he first heard of his Master's coming passion (Matt. xvi. 22), came back upon him, and he shrank from the taunts and ridicule which were sure to fall upon the followers of One whom they had acknowledged as the Christ, and whose career was ending in apparent failure. It was against that feeling of shame that our Lord on that occasion had specially warned him (Mark viii. 38). The element of fear also was, however, probably strong in Peter's nature. (Comp. Gal. ii. 12.)

(72) **With an oath.**—The downward step once taken, the disciple's fall was fatally rapid. Forgetful of his Lord's command forbidding any use of oaths in common speech (Matt. v. 34), he did not shrink from invoking the divine name, directly or indirectly, to attest his falsehood.

(73) **Thy speech bewrayeth thee.**—The Galilean *patois* was probably stronger when he spoke under the influence of strong excitement. It was said to have, as its chief feature, a confused thick utterance of the guttural letters of the Hebrew alphabet, so that they could not be distinguished from each other, and the change of *Sh* into *Th.* The half-detection which the remark implied, perhaps, also, some sense of shame at the provincialism attracting notice, led to the more vehement denial that followed.

(74) **To curse and to swear.**—We may infer from the two words that he used some common formula of execration, such as, *e.g.*, "God do so to me and more also" (1 Kings xix. 2; xx. 10), as well as the oath-formula, "By Heaven," or "By the Temple."

**Immediately the cock crew.**—St. Mark alone records the first cock-crow. The Greek has no article; "*a* cock crew." We find from Mark xiii. 35 that "cock-crowing" had become a familiar phrase, as with us, for the earliest hour of dawn.

(75) **Peter remembered the word of Jesus.**—St. Luke records (xxii. 61) that it was at this moment, probably as He was passing from the council chamber, mocked and buffeted by the officers, that "the Lord turned and looked upon Peter." That glance, full, we must believe, of tenderest pity and deepest sadness, as of one who was moved not by anger but by sorrow, recalled him to his better self, and the flood-gates of

bered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

CHAPTER XXVII.—(1) When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death:[a] (2) and when they had bound him, they led *him* away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

A.D. 33.

[a] Mark 15. 1; Luke 22. 66; John 18. 28.

(3) Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, (4) saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the

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penitence were opened. From that hour we lose sight of him till the morning of the Resurrection. We may infer from his then appearing in company with John (John xx. 3), that he turned in his contrition to the friend and companion of his early years, who had probably witnessed his denials, and was not repulsed. The fact that the record of his fall appears in every Gospel, may be noted as indicating that, in after years, he did not shrink from letting men know of his guilt, but sought rather that men might find in him (as St. Paul afterwards in *his* experience, 1 Tim. i. 12—16) a proof of the mercy and tender pity of his Lord.

### XXVII.

(1) **Took counsel.**—Better, *held a council.* (Comp. the use of the word in Acts xxv. 12.) Another formal meeting was held (according to the Jewish rule that the sentence of the judges was not to be given at the same sitting as the trial) to confirm the previous decision, and probably to determine on the next step to be taken. It ended, as the next verse shows, in sending our Lord to Pilate, and leaving to him the responsibility of punishing. They entered, as the sequel shows, on a kind of diplomatic struggle as to the limits of the ecclesiastical and imperial powers, the former seeking to make the latter its tool, the latter to avoid the responsibility of seeming to act in that character.

(2) **Pontius Pilate.**—It may be well to bring together the chief known facts as to the previous history of the Governor, or more accurately, the Procurator, of Judæa, whose name is conspicuous as occupying a solitary prominence in the creeds of Christendom. He must have belonged, by birth or adoption, to the *gens* of the Pontii, one of whom, C. Pontius Telesinus, had been the leader of the Samnites in their second and third wars against Rome B.C. 321—292. The *cognomen* Pilatus means "armed with the *pilum* or javelin," and may have had its origin in some early military achievement. As applied, however, to Mount Pilatus in Switzerland, it has been conjectured that it is a contracted form of *Pileatus*, from *pilea* a cap, and is applied to the mountain as having for the most part, a cloud-capped summit. When Judæa became formally subject to the empire, on the deposition of Archelaus, a *procurator*, or collector of revenue, invested with judicial power, was appointed to govern it, subject to the Governor of Syria (Luke ii. 2), and resided commonly at Cæsarea. Pontius Pilate, of whose previous career we know nothing, was appointed, A.D. 25—26, as the sixth holder of that office. His administration had already, prior to our Lord's trial, been marked by a series of outrages on Jewish feelings. (1) He had removed the head-quarters of his army from Cæsarea to Jerusalem, and the troops brought their standards with the image of the emperor into the Holy City. The people were excited into frenzy, and rushed in crowds to Cæsarea to implore him to spare them this outrage on their religion. After five days of obstinacy and a partial attempt to suppress the tumult, Pilate at last yielded (Jos. *Ant.* xvii. 3, §§ 1, 2; *Wars*, ii. 9, §§ 2—4). (2) He had hung up in his palace at Jerusalem gilt shields inscribed with the names of heathen deities, and would not remove them till an express order came from Tiberius (Philo, *Leg. ad Caium*, c. 38). (3) He had taken money from the Corban, or treasury of the Temple, for the construction of an aqueduct. This led to another tumult, which was suppressed by the slaughter not of the rioters only, but also of casual spectators (Jos. *Wars*, ii. 9, § 4). (4) Lastly, on some unknown occasion, he had slain some Galileans while they were in the very act of sacrificing (Luke xiii. 1), and this had probably caused the ill-feeling between him and the tetrarch Antipas mentioned in Luke xxiii. 12. It is well to bear in mind these antecedents of the man, as notes of character, as we follow him through the series of vacillations which we now have to trace.

(3) **Then Judas, which had betrayed him.**—Better, *the betrayer.* The Greek participle is in the present tense. The narrative which follows is found only in St. Matthew, but another version of the same facts is given in Acts i. 18. Here, too, as in the case of Peter, we have to guess at motives. Had he looked for any other result than this? Was he hoping that his Lord, when forced to a decision, would assert His claim as the Christ, put forth His power, and triumph over His enemies, and that so he would gain at once the reward of treachery and the credit of having contributed to establish the Kingdom? This has been maintained by some eminent writers, and it is certainly possible, but the mere remorse of one who, after acting in the frenzy of criminal passion, sees the consequences of his deeds in all their horror, furnishes an adequate explanation of what follows.

**Repented himself.**—The Greek word is not that commonly used for "repentance," as involving a change of mind and heart, but is rather "regret," a simple change of feeling. The coins which he had once gazed on and clutched at eagerly were now hateful in his sight, and their touch like that of molten metal from the furnace. He must get rid of them somehow. There is something terribly suggestive in the fact that here there were no tears as there had been in Peter's repentance.

(4) **I have sinned in that I have betrayed.**—More accurately, *I sinned in betraying.*

**What is that to us?**—We instinctively feel, as we read these words, that deep as was the guilt of Judas, that of those who thus mocked him was deeper still. Speaking after the manner of men, we may say that a word of sympathy and true counsel might have saved him even then. His confession was as the germ of repentance, but this repulse drove him back upon despair, and he had not the courage or the faith to turn to the great Absolver; and so his life closed as in a blackness of darkness; and if we ask the question, Is there any hope? we dare not answer. Possibly there mingled innocent blood. And they said, What *is that* to us? see thou *to that*. (5) And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed,[a] and went and hanged himself. (6) And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. (7) And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. (8) Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood,[b] unto this day. (9) Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver,[c] the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value;[1] (10) and gave

[b] Acts 1. 19.

[a] Acts 1. 18.

[c] Zech. 11. 12.

[1] Or, *whom they bought of the children of Israel.*

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with his agony, as has been suggested by one at least of the great teachers of the Church (Origen, *Hom. in Matt.* xxxv.), some confused thought that in the world of the dead, behind the veil, he might meet his Lord and confess his guilt to Him.

(5) **He cast down the pieces of silver in the temple.**—The Greek word for "Temple" is that which specially denotes (as in Matt. xxiii. 16; xxvi. 61; John ii. 19), not the whole building, but the "sanctuary," which only the priests could enter. They had stood, it would seem, talking with Judas before the veil or curtain which screened it from the outer court, and he hurled or flung it into the Holy Place.

**Hanged himself.**—The word is the same as that used of Ahithophel, in the Greek version of 2 Sam. xvii. 23, and is a perfectly accurate rendering. Some difficulties present themselves on comparing this brief record with Acts i. 18, which will be best examined in the Notes on that passage. Briefly, it may be said here that the horrors there recorded may have been caused by the self-murderer's want of skill, or the trembling agony that could not tie the noose firm enough.

(6) **It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury.**—The Greek for the last word is the Corban, or sacred treasure-chest of the Temple, into which no foreign coins were admitted, and from which the Law (Deut. xxiii. 18) excluded the unclean offerings of the price of shame, which entered largely into the ritual of many heathen nations. By parity of reasoning, the priests seem to have thought that the blood-money which was thus returned was excluded also.

(7) **And they took counsel.**—As before, *they held a council.*

**The potter's field.**—In Jer. xviii. 2 we read of the "potter's house" as being outside the city, probably, from Jer. xix. 2, in the Valley of Hinnom (*Gehenna*), on the south side of Jerusalem. It is probable that it had been worked out in course of time, and was now in the state of a disused quarry. It was necessary, now that Roman soldiers were often stationed in the city, and men of all nations came to it, to provide some burial-place for them; but no Jew would admit their bones into the sepulchre of his fathers. On the other hand, every devout Jew would shrink from the thought of burying his dead in the foul and hateful spot which had become the type of the unseen Gehenna. (See Notes on chap. v. 22.) There was, therefore, a subtle fitness of association in the policy which the priests adopted. The place was itself accursed; it was bought with accursed money; it was to be used for the burial of the accursed strangers.

(8) **The field of blood.**—St. Luke (Acts i. 19) gives the Aramaic form, *Akeldama*, but assigns the death of Judas in a field which he had bought as the origin of the name. It is possible that two spots may have been known by the same name for distinct reasons, and the fact that two places have been shown as the Field of Blood from the time of Jerome downwards, is, as far as it goes, in favour of this view. It is equally possible, on the other hand, that Judas may have gone, before or after the purchase, to the ground which, bought with his money, was, in some sense his own, and there ended his despair, dying literally in Gehenna, and buried, not in the grave of his fathers at Kerioth, but as an outcast, with none to mourn over him, in the cemetery of the aliens.

**Unto this day.**—The phrase suggests here, as again in chap. xxviii. 15, an interval, more or less considerable, between the events and the record. (Comp. the *Introduction* as to the date of the Gospel.)

(9) **Then was fulfilled.**—Three questions present themselves, more or less difficult:—(1) The words cited are found in our present Old Testament, not in Jeremiah, but in Zech. xi. 13, and there is no trace of their ever having occupied any other place in the Hebrew Canon. How is this discrepancy to be explained? (*a*) Are we to assume an early error in transcription? Against this, there is the fact that MSS. and versions, with one or two exceptions, in which the correction is obviously of later date, give Jeremiah and not Zechariah. (*b*) May we fall back upon the Jewish notion that the spirit of Jeremiah had passed into Zechariah; or that Jeremiah, having, at one time, stood first in the Jewish order of the Prophets, was taken as representing the whole volume, as David was of the whole Book of Psalms? This is possible, but it hardly falls within the limits of probability that the writer of the Gospel would deliberately have thus given his quotation in a form sure to cause perplexity. (*c*) May we believe that the writer quoted from memory, and that recollecting the two conspicuous chapters (xviii. and xix.) in which Jeremiah had spoken of the potter and his work, he was led to think that this also belonged to the same group of prophecies? I am free to confess that the last hypothesis seems to me the most natural and free from difficulty, unless it be the difficulty which is created by an arbitrary hypothesis as to the necessity of literal accuracy in an inspired writing. (2) There is the fact that the words given by St. Matthew neither represent the Greek version of Zech. xi. 13, nor the original Hebrew, but have the look of being a free quotation from memory adapted to the facts; and this, so far as it goes, is in favour of the last hypothesis. (3) It is hardly necessary to dwell on the fact that the words as they stand in Zechariah have an adequate historical meaning entirely independent of St. Matthew's application of them. This, as we have seen again and again (chaps. i. 23; ii. 15—18; iv. 15; viii. 17; xii. 18), was entirely compatible with the Evangelist's manner of dealing with prophecy. It was enough for him that the old words fitted into the facts, without asking, as we ask, whether they were originally meant to point to them. The combination in one verse, as he remembered it, of the thirty pieces of silver and the potter's field, was a coincidence that he could not pass over.

them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me. (11) And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest. (12) And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. (13) Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? (14) And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly. (15) Now at *that* feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner,[a] whom they would. (16) And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas. (17) Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ? (18) For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.

(19) When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

[a] Luke 23. 17.

(11) **And Jesus stood before the governor.**—We may infer from the greater fulness with which St. John relates what passed between our Lord and Pilate, that here, too, his acquaintance with the high priest gave him access to knowledge which others did not possess. We learn from him (1) that in his first conversation with the accusers, Pilate endeavoured to throw the *onus* of judging upon them, and was met by the ostentatious disavowal of any power to execute judgment (John xviii. 28—32); (2) that the single question which St. Matthew records was followed by a conversation in which our Lord declared that, though He was a King, it was not after the manner of the kingdoms of the world (John xviii. 33—38). The impression thus made on the mind of the Governor explains the desire which he felt to effect, in some way or other, the release of the accused.

(12) **He answered nothing.**—Here, as before in chap. xxvi. 63, we have to realise the contrast between the vehement clamour of the accusers, the calm, imperturbable, patient silence of the accused, and the wonder of the judge at what was so different from anything that had previously come within the range of his experience.

(15) **The governor was wont to release.**—It is not known when the practice began, nor whether it was primarily a Jewish or a Roman one. The fact that the release of criminals was a common incident of a Latin *lectisternium*, or feast in honour of the gods, makes the latter the more probable. If introduced by Pilate (and this is the only recorded instance of the practice) it was, we may believe, a concession intended to conciliate those whom his previous severities had alienated. Before this stage of the proceedings we have to place (1) the second conference between Pilate and the priests after his dialogue with our Lord (Luke xxiii. 4, 5), and their definite charge of sedition, now urged for the first time; and (2) his attempt, catching at the word "Galilee" as the scene of our Lord's work, to transfer the responsibility of judging to Herod (Luke xxiii. 6—12).

(16) **A notable prisoner, called Barabbas.**—There is considerable, though not quite decisive, evidence in favour of the reading which gives "Jesus Barabbas" as the name of the prisoner. The name Bar-abbas (=son of Abbas, or of "a father"), like Bartimæus and Bar-tholomew, was a patronymic, and it would be natural enough that the man who bore it should have another more personal name. We can easily understand (1) that the commonness of the name Jesus might lead to his being known to his comrades and to the multitude only or chiefly as Barabbas; and (2) that the reverence which men felt in after years for the Name which is above every name, would lead them to blot out, if it were possible, the traces that it had once been borne by the robber-chief. Of Barabbas St. John (xviii. 40) tells us that he was a robber; St. Luke (xxiii. 19) and St. Mark (xv. 7) that he had taken a prominent part with some insurgents in the city, and that he, with them, had committed murder in the insurrection. The last recorded tumult of this kind was that mentioned above (Note on verse 2), as connected with Pilate's appropriation of the Corban. It is so far probable that this was the tumult in which Barabbas had taken part; and the supposition that he did so has at least the merit of explaining how it was that he came to be the favourite hero both of the priests and people. As the term Abba (=father) was a customary term of honour, as applied to a Rabbi (Matt. xxiii. 9), it is possible that the sobriquet by which he was popularly known commemorated a fact in his family history of which he might naturally be proud. "Jesus, the Rabbi's son" was a cry that found more favour than "Jesus the Nazarene."

(17) **Whom will ye that I release unto you?**—This, we must remember, was all but the last attempt of Pilate to shift off from himself the dreaded burden of responsibility.

(18) **He knew that for envy.**—Pilate knew enough of the accusers to see through the hollowness of their pretended zeal for their own religion, or for the authority of the emperor. He found their real motive in "envy"—fear of the loss of influence and power, if the work of the new Teacher was to continue.

(19) **The judgment seat.**—The chair of judgment was placed upon a Mosaic pavement, and was indispensable to the official action of any provincial ruler. (Comp. Note on John xix. 13.)

**His wife sent unto him.**—Under the old regime of the Republic provincial governors were not allowed to take their wives with them; but the rule had been relaxed under the Empire, and Tacitus records (*Ann.* iii. 33, 34) a vain attempt to revive its strictness. Nothing more is known of the woman thus mentioned; but the Apocryphal *Gospel of Nicodemus* (ii. 1) gives her name as Procula, and states that she was a proselyte to Judaism. The latter fact is probable enough. About this time, both at Rome and in other cities, such, *e.g.*, as Thessalonica and Berœa (Acts xvii. 4, 12), Jews had gained considerable influence over women of the higher classes, and carried on an active work of proselytism.

**With that just man.**—The word is striking, as showing the impression which had been made on

(20) But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas,[a] and destroy Jesus. (21) The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas. (22) Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? *They* all say unto him, Let him be crucified. (23) And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.

(24) When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye *to it*. (25) Then answered all the people, and said, His blood *be* on us, and on our children.

(26) Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *him* to be crucified. (27) Then the soldiers of the governor[b] took Jesus into the common hall,[1] and

[a] John 18. 40; Acts 3. 14.

[b] John 19. 2.

[1] Or, *governor's house.*

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Pilate's wife by all she had seen or heard. As contrasted with priests and scribes, He was emphatically the “just,” the “righteous” One.

**In a dream because of him.**—Questions rise in our minds as to the nature of the dream. Was it, as some have thought, a divine warning intended to save her husband from the guilt into which he was on the point of plunging? Did it come from the Evil Spirit, as designed to hinder the completion of the atoning work? Was it simply the reflection of the day-thoughts of a sensitive and devout woman? We have no *data* for answering such questions, but the very absence of *data* makes it safer and more reverential to adopt the last view, as involving less of presumptuous conjecture in a region where we have not been called to enter. What the dream was like may be a subject for a poet's or—as in a well-known picture by a living artist—for a painter's imagination, but does not fall within the province of the interpreter.

(20) **The chief priests and elders.**—Brief as the statement is it implies much; the members of the Sanhedrin standing before Pilate's palace, mingling with the crowd, whispering—now to this man, now to that—praises of the robber, scoffs and slander against the Christ. As the next verse shows, they did their work effectively.

(22) **Let him be crucified.**—It may be noted that this was the first direct intimation of the mode of death to which the priests destined their prisoner. It was implied, indeed, in their fixed resolve to make the Roman governor the executioner of their sentence, as shown in the dialogue recorded by St. John (xviii. 31); but now the cry came from the multitude, as the result, we may believe, of the promptings described in verse 20, “Crucify Him!”—punish Him as the robber and the rebel are punished.

(23) **Why, what evil hath he done?**—The question attested the judge's conviction of the innocence of the accused, but it attested also the cowardice of the judge. He was startled at the passionate malignity of the cry of the multitude and the priests, but had not the courage to resist it. We find from Luke xxiii. 22, that he had recourse to the desperate expedient of suggesting a milder punishment—“I will chastise,” *i.e.*, scourge, “Him, and let Him go;” but the suggestion itself showed his weakness, and therefore did but stimulate the crowd to persist in their demand for death.

(24) **He took water, and washed his hands.**—The act belonged to an obvious and almost universal symbolism. So in Deut. xxi. 6 the elders of a city in which an undiscovered murder had been committed were to wash their hands over the sin-offering, and to say, “Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it.” (Comp. also Ps. xxvi. 6.) Pilate probably chose it, partly as a relief to his own conscience, partly to appease his wife's scruples, partly as a last appeal of the most vivid and dramatic kind to the feelings of the priests and people. One of the popular poets of his own time and country might have taught him the nullity of such a formal ablution—

> “Ah nimium faciles, qui tristia crimina cædis
> Flumineâ tolli posse putetis aquâ.”
>
> “Too easy souls who dream the crystal flood
> Can wash away the fearful guilt of blood.”
> Ovid, *Fast.* ii. 45.

(25) **His blood be on us, and on our children.**—The passionate hate of the people leads them, as if remembering the words of their own Law, to invert the prayer—which Pilate's act had, it may be, brought to their remembrance—“Lay not innocent blood to Thy people of Israel's charge” (Deut. xxi. 8), into a defiant imprecation. No more fearful prayer is recorded in the history of mankind; and a natural feeling has led men to see its fulfilment in the subsequent shame and misery that were for centuries the portion of the Jewish people. We have to remember, however, that but a fractional part of the people were present; that some at least of the rulers, such as Joseph of Arimathæa, Nicodemus, and probably Gamaliel, had not consented to the deed of blood (Luke xxiii. 51), and that even in such a case as this it is still true that “the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father” (Ezek. xviii. 20), except so far as he consents to it, and reproduces it.

(26) **When he had scourged Jesus.**—The word used by St. Matthew, derived from the Latin *flagellum*, shows that it was the Roman punishment with knotted thongs of leather (like the Russian “knout” or the English “cat”), not the Jewish beating with rods (2 Cor. xi. 24, 25). The pictures of the Stations, so widely used throughout Latin Christendom, have made other nations more familiar with the nature of the punishment than most Englishmen are. The prisoner was stripped sometimes entirely, sometimes to the waist, and tied by the hands to a pillar, with his back bent, so as to receive the full force of the blows. The scourge was of stout leather weighted with lead or bones. Jewish law limited its penalty to forty stripes, reduced in practice to “forty stripes save one” (2 Cor. xi. 24; Deut. xxv. 3), but Roman practice knew no limit but that of the cruelty of the executioner or the physical endurance of the sufferer.

(27) **The common hall.**—Literally, the *Prætorium*, a word which, applied originally to the tent of the prætor, or general, and so to the head-quarters of the camp, had come to be used, with a somewhat wide range

gathered unto him the whole band *of soldiers.* (28) And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe.

(29) And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put *it* upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! (30) And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. (31) And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify *him.* (32) And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene,[a] Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross. (33) And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha,[b] that is to say, a place of a skull,

[a] Mark 15. 21; Luke 23. 26.

[b] John 19. 17.

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of meaning, (1) for the residence of a prince or governor; or (2) for the barracks attached to such a residence (as in Phil. i. 13); or (3) for any house as stately. Here (as in Acts xxiii. 35) it appears to be used in the first sense. Pilate's dialogue with the priests and people had probably been held from the portico of the Tower of Antony, which rose opposite the Temple Court, and served partly as a fortress, partly as an official residence. The soldiers now took the prisoner into their barrack-room within.

**The whole band of soldiers.**—The word used is the technical word for the cohort, or sub-division of a legion.

(28) **A scarlet robe.**—Here again we have a technical word, the *chlamys* or *paludamentum,* used for the military cloak worn by emperors in their character as generals, and by other officers of high rank (Pliny, xxii. 2, 3). St. Mark and St. John call it purple (Mark xv. 17; John xix. 2); but the "purple" of the ancients was "crimson," and the same colour might easily be called by either name. It was probably some cast-off cloak of Pilate's own, or, possibly, that in which Herod had before arrayed Him (Luke xxiii. 11). Philo records a like mockery as practised upon an idiot at Alexandria, who was there made to represent Herod Agrippa II. (*in Flacc.* p. 980). It was but too common a practice to subject condemned prisoners before execution to this kind of outrage. Here the point of the mockery lay, of course, in the fact that their Victim had been condemned as claiming the title of a King. They had probably seen or heard of the insults of like kind offered by Herod and his soldiers (Luke xxiii. 21), and now reproduced them with aggravated cruelty.

(29) **A crown of thorns.**—The word is too vague to enable us to identify the plant with certainty, but most writers have fixed on the *Zizyphus Spina Christi,* known locally as the *Nebk,* a shrub growing plentifully in the valley of the Jordan, with branches pliant and flexible, and leaves of a dark glossy green, like ivy, and sharp prickly thorns. The likeness of the crown or garland thus made to that worn by conquering kings and emperors, fitted it admirably for the purpose. The shrub was likely enough to be found in the garden attached to the Prætorium.

**A reed in his right hand.**—Here also the word is vague, and it may have been the stalk either of a sugar-cane, a *Papyrus,* or an *Arundo.* It represented, of course, the sceptre which, even under the Republic, had been wielded by generals in their triumphs, and which under the Empire, as with Greek and Eastern kings, had become the received symbol of sovereignty.

**They bowed the knee before him.**—We have to represent to ourselves the whole cohort as joining in the derisive homage. The term in Mark xv. 19 implies a continued, not a momentary act—the band filing before the mock-king, and kneeling as they passed.

(30) **They spit upon him.**—See Note on chap. xxvi. 67.

(31) **They took the robe off from him.**—At this point we have to insert the account which St. John gives (xix. 4, 5) of Pilate's last attempt to rescue the "just Man" whom he had unjustly condemned. He showed the silent Sufferer in the mock insignia of royalty, as if asking them, Is not this enough? The cries of "Crucify Him!" were but redoubled, and once again the cowardly judge took his place in the official chair, and passed the final sentence. The "raiment" which they put on Him again included both the tunic and the cloak, or over-garment. In this case, the former was made without seam or opening (John xix. 23), and the mere act of drawing it roughly over the lacerated flesh must have inflicted acute agony.

(32) **They found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name.**—There seems at that time to have been a flourishing settlement of Jews in Cyrene, and members of that community appear as prominent in the crowd of the day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 10), among the disputants who opposed Stephen (Acts vi. 9), and among the active preachers of the Word (Acts xi. 20). Why, we ask, out of the whole crowd that was streaming to and fro, on the way to the place of execution, did the multitude seize on him? St. Mark's mention of him as the father of Alexander and Rufus (see Note on Mark xv. 21), suggests the thought that his sons were afterwards prominent as members of the Christian community. May we not infer that he was suspected even then of being a secret disciple, and that this led the people to seize on him, and make him a sharer in the humiliation of his Master? He was coming, St. Mark adds, "out of the country."

**Him they compelled.**—The word is the technical term for forced service (see Note on chap. v. 41). The act implied that our Lord was sinking beneath the burden, and that the soldiers began to fear that He might die before they reached the place of execution.

(33) **A place called Golgotha.**—The other Gospels give the name with the definite article, as though it were a well-known locality. It is not mentioned, however, by any Jewish writer, and its position is matter of conjecture. It was "nigh unto the city" (John xix. 20), and therefore outside the walls (comp. Heb. xiii 12). There was a garden in it (John xix. 41), and in the garden a tomb, which was the property of Joseph of Arimathæa (verse 60). A tradition, traceable to the fourth century, has identified the spot with the building known as the Church of the Sepulchre. One eminent archæologist of our own time (Mr. James Fergusson) identifies it with the Dome of the Rock in the Mosque of El Aksa. Both sites were then outside the city, but were afterwards enclosed by the third wall, built by Agrippa II. The name has been supposed by some to point to its being a common place of execution; but it is not probable that the skulls of criminals would have

(34) They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted *thereof,* he would not drink. (35) And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them,[a] and upon my vesture did they cast lots. (36) And sitting down they watched him there; (37) and set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. (38) Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.

(39) And they that passed by reviled

[a] Ps. 22. 18.

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been left unburied, nor that a wealthy Jew should have chosen such a spot for a garden and a burial-place. The facts lead rather to the conclusion (1) that the name indicated the round, bare, skull-like character of the eminence which was so called; and (2) that it may have been chosen by the priests as a deliberate insult to the member of their own body who had refused to share their policy, and was at least suspected of discipleship, and whose garden, or orchard, with its rock-hewn sepulchre, lay hard by (Mark xv. 43; Luke xxiii. 51; John xix. 38). A later legend saw in the name a token that the bones of Adam were buried there, and that as the blood flowed from the sacred wounds on his skull his soul was translated to Paradise. The more familiar name of Calvary (Luke xxiii. 35) has its origin in the Vulgate rendering (*Calvarium*=a skull) of the Greek word *Kranion,* or *Cranium,* which the Evangelist actually uses.

(34) **Vinegar to drink mingled with gall.**—In Mark xv. 23, "wine mingled with myrrh." The animal secretion known as "gall" is clearly out of the question, and the meaning of the word is determined by its use in the Greek version of the Old Testament, where it stands for the "wormwood" of Prov. v. 4, for the poisonous herb joined with "wormwood" in Deut. xxix. 18. It was clearly something at once nauseous and narcotic, given by the merciful to dull the pain of execution, and mixed with the sour wine of the country and with myrrh to make it drinkable. It may have been hemlock, or even poppy-juice, but there are no materials for deciding. It is probable that the offer came from the more pitiful of the women mentioned by St. Luke (xxiii. 27) as following our Lord and lamenting. Such acts were among the received "works of mercy" of the time and place. The "tasting" implied a recognition of the kindly purpose of the act, but a recognition only. In the refusal to do more than taste we trace the resolute purpose to drink the cup which His Father had given Him to the last drop, and not to dull either the sense of suffering nor the clearness of His communion with His Father with the slumberous potion. The same draught was, we may believe, offered to the two criminals who were crucified with Him.

(35) **They crucified him.**—The cross employed in capital punishment varied in its form, being sometimes simply a stake on which the sufferer was impaled, sometimes consisting of two pieces of timber put together in the form of a T or an X (as in what we know as the St. Andrew's cross); sometimes in that familiar to us in Christian art as the Latin cross. In this instance, the fact that the title or superscription was placed over our Lord's head, implies that the last was the kind of cross employed. In carrying the sentence of crucifixion into effect, the cross was laid on the ground, the condemned man stripped and laid upon it. Sometimes he was simply tied; sometimes, as here, nails driven through the hands and feet; sometimes a projecting ledge was put for the feet to rest on; sometimes the whole weight of the body hung upon the limbs that were thus secured. The clothes of the criminal were the usual perquisites of the executioners, and in this case included (as we find from John xix. 23) the tunic worn next the body as well as the outer garment. It was as the soldiers were thus nailing Him to the cross that He prayed, "Father, forgive them" (Luke xxiii. 34).

**They parted my garments among them.**—St. John (xix. 24) emphatically records a yet more literal fulfilment of the words than that noted by St. Matthew. The thoughts of both disciples, we may believe, were turned to Ps. xxii. 18 by our Lord's utterance of its opening words (verse 46), and thus led to dwell on the manifold coincidences of its language with the facts of the Passion.

(37) **THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**—This was what was technically known as the *titulus*—the bill, or placard, showing who the condemned person was, and why he was punished. Each Gospel gives it in a slightly different form—Mark (xv. 26), "The King of the Jews;" Luke (xxiii. 38), "This is the King of the Jews;" John (xix. 19), "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." The variations are, perhaps, in part, explicable on the assumption of corresponding differences in the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin forms of the inscription, which reproduced themselves in the reports upon which the Gospel narratives were based. But in part also they may reasonably be ascribed to the natural variations sure to arise even among eye-witnesses, and *à fortiori* among those who were not eye-witnesses, as to the circumstantial details of events which they record in common. On grounds of ordinary likelihood St. John's record, as that of the only disciple whom we know to have been present at the crucifixion (John xix. 25), may claim to be the most accurate.

There was, apparently, a kind of rough tenderness towards the Man whom he had condemned in the form which Pilate had ordered. He would at least recognise His claims to be in some sense a King. The priests obviously felt it to imply such a recognition, a declaration, as it were, to them and to the people that One who had a right to be their King, who was the only kind of King they were ever likely to have, had died the death of a malefactor, and therefore they clamoured for a change, which Pilate refused to make (John xix. 20).

(38) **Then were there two thieves crucified with him.**—Better, *robbers,* the word being the same as that used of Barabbas (John xviii. 40). It would seem, as there is no record of their trial, as if they were already under sentence of death; and it is probable enough that they were members of the same band, and had been sharers in the same insurrection. The legends of the Apocryphal *Gospel of Nicodemus* (i. 10), give their names as Dysmas and Gysmas, and these names appear still in the Calvaries and Stations of Roman Catholic countries.

(39) **They that passed by.**—The words bring before us the picture of a lounging crowd, strolling from one cross to the other, and mocking the central sufferer of the three. Rulers and chief priests were not ashamed

him, wagging their heads, (40) and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. (41) Likewise also the chief priests mocking *him*, with the scribes and elders, said, (42) He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. (43) He trusted in God;[a] let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. (44) The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth. (45) Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. (46) And

[a] Ps. 22. 8; Wisd. 2. 16, 17, 18.

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to take part in the brutal mockery of a dying man. The spoken taunts were doubtless often repeated, and not always in the same form, but their burden is always the same.

(40) **Thou that destroyest the temple.**—Our Lord had not been formally condemned on this charge, the evidence being insufficient, but it had clearly impressed itself on the minds of the people, and was probably that which most worked upon them to demand His death. The other words, "If thou be the Son of God," referred to the actual condemnation on the ground of blasphemy (chap. xxvi. 64, 65). We may reverently think of the form of the taunt as having recalled that of the Temptation in the Wilderness. Then, as now, the words "If thou be the Son of God" were as a challenge from the Power of Evil. Now, as then, they were met by the strength of Faith. To accept the challenge would have been to show that He did not trust the Father, just as it would have been not faith, but want of faith, to have cast Himself from the pinnacle of the Temple, and therefore to disown His Sonship in the very act of claiming it.

(41) **The chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders.**—It would seem as if all, or nearly all, the members of the Sanhedrin—those, at least, who had taken part in the condemnation—had come to feast their eyes with the sight of their Victim's sufferings.

(42) **He saved others.**—The mockers, as before (comp. John xi. 50, 51), bear unconscious witness to the truth. They referred, it may be, to the works of healing and the raising of the dead which had been wrought in Galilee and Jerusalem, but their words were true in a yet higher sense. He had come into the world to save others, regardless of Himself.

(43) **Let him deliver him now.**—It seems at first hardly conceivable that priests and scribes could thus have quoted the very words of Ps. xxii. 8, and so have fulfilled one of the great Messianic prophecies. But (1) we must remember that they, ignoring the idea of a suffering Christ, would not look on the Psalm as Messianic at all, and (2) that their very familiarity with the words of the Psalm would naturally bring its phraseology to their lips when occasion called for it. Only they would persuade themselves that they were right in using it, while David's enemies were wrong.

(44) **The thieves also . . . cast the same in his teeth.**—Literally, *reviled Him.* On the change which afterwards came over one of them, see Note on Luke xxiii. 40.

(45) **From the sixth hour.**—The first three Gospels agree as to time and fact. Assuming them to follow the usual Jewish reckoning (as in Acts ii. 15; iii 1; x. 3, 9) this would be noon, the fixing to the cross having been at the third hour, 9 A.M. (Mark xv. 25), and the darkness lasting till 3 P.M. St. John names the "sixth hour" as the time of our Lord's final condemnation by Pilate, following apparently (see Note there and on John iv. 6) the Roman or modern mode of reckoning from midnight to noon. Looking to the facts of the case, it is probable that our Lord was taken to the high priest's palace about 3 A.M. (the "cock-crow" of Mark xiii. 35). Then came the first hearing before Annas (John xviii. 13), then the trial before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin, then the formal meeting that passed the sentence. This would fill up the time probably till 6 A.M., and three hours may be allowed for the trials before Pilate and Herod. After the trial was over there would naturally be an interval for the soldiers to take their early meal, and then the slow procession to Golgotha, delayed, we may well believe, by our Lord's falling, once or oftener, beneath the burden of the cross, and so we come to 9 A.M. for His arrival at the place of crucifixion.

**Darkness over all the land.**—Better so than the "earth" of the Authorised version of Luke xxiii. 44. The degree and nature of the darkness are not defined. The moon was at its full, and therefore there could be no eclipse. St. John does not name it, nor is it recorded by Josephus, Tacitus, or any contemporary writer. On the other hand, its appearance in records in many respects so independent of each other as those of the three Gospels places it, even as the common grounds of historical probability, on a sufficiently firm basis, and early Christian writers, such as Tertullian (*Apol.* c. 21) and Origen (*c. Cels.* ii. 33), appeal to it as attested by heathen writers. The narrative does not necessarily involve more than the indescribable yet most oppressive gloom which seems to shroud the whole sky as in mourning (comp. Amos viii. 9, 10), and which being a not uncommon phenomenon of earthquakes, may have been connected with that described in verse 51. It is an indirect confirmation of the statement that about this time there is an obvious change in the conduct of the crowd. There is a pause and lull. The gibes and taunts cease, and the life of the Crucified One ends in a silence broken only by His own bitter cry.

(46) **Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani.**—The cry is recorded only by St. Matthew and St. Mark. The very syllables or tones dwelt in the memory of those who heard and understood it, and its absence from St. John's narrative was probably due to the fact that he had before this taken the Virgin-Mother from the scene of the crucifixion as from that which was more than she could bear (John xix. 27). To the Roman soldiers, to many of the by-standers, Greeks or Hellenistic Jews, the words would be, as the sequel shows, unintelligible. We shrink instinctively from any over-curious analysis of the inner feelings in our Lord's humanity that answered to this utterance. Was it the natural fear of death? or the vicarious endurance of the wrath which was the penalty of the sins of the human race, for whom, and instead of whom, He suffered? Was there a momentary interruption of the conscious union between His human soul and the light of His Father's countenance? or, as seems implied in John xix. 28,

about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God,[a] why hast thou forsaken me? (47) Some of them that stood there, when they heard *that*, said, This *man* calleth for Elias. (48) And straightway one of them ran, and took a spunge, and filled *it* with vinegar,[b] and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink. (49) The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him.

(50) Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. (51) And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the

[a] Ps. 22. 1.

[b] Ps. 69. 21.

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did He quote the words in order to direct the thoughts of men to the great Messianic prophecy which the Psalm contained? None of these answers is altogether satisfactory, and we may well be content to leave the mystery unfathomed, and to let our words be wary and few. We may remember (1) that both the spoken words of His enemies (verse 43) and the acts of the soldiers (verse 35) must have recalled the words of that Psalm; (2) that memory thus roused would pass on to the cry of misery with which the Psalm opened; (3) that our Lord as man was to taste death in all its bitterness for every man (Heb. ii. 9), and that He could not so have tasted it had His soul been throughout in full undisturbed enjoyment of the presence of the Father; (4) that the lives of the saints of God, in proportion to their likeness to the mind of Christ, have exhibited this strange union, or rather instantaneous succession, of the sense of abandonment and of intensest faith. The Psalmist himself, in this very Psalm, is one instance; Job (xix. 6—9, 23—26) and Jeremiah (xx. 7—9, 12, 13) may be named as others. Conceive this conflict—and the possibility of such a conflict is postulated in John xii. 27 and in the struggle of Gethsemane—and then, though we cannot understand, we may in part at least conceive, how it was possible for the Son of Man to feel for one moment that sense of abandonment, which is the last weapon of the Enemy. He tasted of despair as others had tasted, but in the very act of tasting, the words "My God" were as a protest against it, and by them He was delivered from it. It is remarkable, whatever explanation may be given of it, that as these words are recorded by the first two Gospels only, so they are the only words spoken on the cross which we find in their report of the Crucifixion.

(47) **This man calleth for Elias.** — There is no ground for looking on this as a wilful, derisive misinterpretation. The words may have been imperfectly understood, or some of those who listened may have been Hellenistic Jews. The dominant expectation of the coming of Elijah (see Notes on chaps. xvi. 14; xvii. 10) would predispose men to fasten on the similarity of sound, and the strange unearthly darkness would intensify the feeling that looked for a supernatural manifestation of His presence.

(48) **Took a spunge, and filled it with vinegar.** —The "vinegar" was the sour wine, or wine and water, which was the common drink of the Roman soldiers, and which they at an earlier stage, and as in derision (Luke xxiii. 36), had offered to the Sufferer. The sponge had probably served instead of a cork to the jar in which the soldiers had brought the drink that was to sustain them in their long day's work. Some one, whether soldier or Jew we know not, heard, not only the cry, "Eli, Eli, . . ," but the faint "I thirst," which St. John records as coming from the fevered lips (John xix. 28), and prompted by a rough pity, stretched out a cane, or stalk of hyssop (John xix. 29), with the sponge that had been dipped in the wine upon it, and bore it to the parched lips of the Sufferer. It was not now refused (John xix. 30).

**And gave him to drink.**—The Greek verb is in the imperfect tense, as implying that while he was doing this, the others tried to interrupt him.

(49) **Let us see whether Elias will come.**— Here again we have eager expectation rather than derision. Was the "great and dreadful day" (Mal. iv. 5) about to burst on them? Would the long-expected prophet at last appear? The sponge and vinegar would seem to minds thus on the stretch an unworthy interruption of the catastrophe of the great drama of which they were spectators.

(50) **When he had cried again with a loud voice.**—It is well that we should remember what the words were which immediately preceded the last death-cry; the "It is finished" of John xix. 30, the "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit" of Luke xxiii. 46, expressing as they did, the fulness of peace and trust, the sense of a completed work.

It was seldom that crucifixion, as a punishment, ended so rapidly as it did here, and those who have discussed, what is hardly perhaps a fit subject for discussion, the physical causes of our Lord's death, have ascribed it accordingly, especially in connection with the fact recorded in John xix. 34, and with the "loud cry," indicating the pangs of an intolerable anguish, to a rupture of the vessels of the heart. Simple exhaustion as the consequence of the long vigil, the agony in the garden, the mocking and the scourging, would be, perhaps, almost as natural an explanation.

**Yielded up the ghost.**—Better, *yielded up His spirit.* All four Evangelists agree in using this or some like expression, instead of the simpler form, "He died." It is as though they dwelt on the act as, in some sense, voluntary, and connected it with the words in which He had commended His spirit to the Father (Luke xxiii. 46).

(51) **The veil of the temple was rent in twain.**—Better, *the veil of the sanctuary*, or, if we do not alter the word, we must remember that it is the veil that divided the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies that is here meant. The fact, which the high priests would naturally have wished to conceal, and which in the nature of the case could not have been seen by any but the sons of Aaron, may have been reported by the "great multitude of the priests" who "became obedient to the faith" (Acts vi. 7). The Evangelist's record of it is all the more significant, as he does not notice, and apparently, therefore, did not apprehend, the symbolic import of the fact. That import we learn indirectly from the Epistle to the Hebrews. The priests had, as far as they had power, destroyed the true Temple (comp. John ii. 19); but in doing so they had robbed their own sanctuary of all that made it holy. The true veil, as that which shrouded the Divine Glory from the eyes of men, was His own flesh, and through that He had passed, as the Forerunner of all who trusted in Him, into the sanctuary

bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; (52) and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, (53) and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. (54) Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God. (55) And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him: (56) among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of

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not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (Heb. x. 20, 21). All who fulfilled that condition might enter into that holiest place, but the visible sanctuary was now made common and unclean, and there too all might enter without profanation.

**The earth did quake, and the rocks rent.**—Jerusalem was, it will be remembered, situated in the zone of earthquakes, and one very memorable convulsion is recorded or alluded to in the Old Testament (Isa. xxiv. 19; Amos i. 1; Zech. xiv. 5). Here, though the shock startled men at the time, there was no widespread ruin such as would lead to its being chronicled by contemporary historians.

(52) **Many bodies of the saints which slept arose.**—It is scarcely, perhaps, surprising that a narrative so exceptional in its marvellousness, and standing, as it does, without any collateral testimony in any other part of the New Testament, should have presented to many minds difficulties which have seemed almost insuperable. They have accordingly either viewed it as a mythical addition, or, where they shrank from that extreme conclusion, have explained it as meaning simply that the bodies of the dead were exposed to view by the earthquake mentioned in the preceding verse, or have seen in it only the honest report of an over-excited imagination. On the other hand, the brevity, and in some sense simplicity, of the statement differences it very widely from such legends, more or less analogous in character, as we find, *e.g.*, in the Apocryphal *Gospel of Nicodemus*, and so far excludes the mythical element which, as a rule, delights to show itself in luxuriant expansion. And this being excluded, we can hardly imagine the Evangelist as writing without having received his information from witnesses whom he thought trustworthy; and then the question rises, whether the narrative is of such a character as to be in itself incredible. On that point men, according to the point of view from which they look on the Gospel records, may naturally differ; but those who believe that when our Lord passed into Hades, the unseen world, it was to complete there what had been begun on earth, to proclaim there His victory over death and sin, will hardly think it impossible that there should have been outward tokens and witnesses of such a work. And the fact which St. Matthew records supplies, it is believed, the most natural explanation of language hardly less startling, which meets us in the Epistle, which even the most adverse critics admit to be from the hands of St. Peter. If he, or those whom he knew, had seen the saints that slept and had risen from their sleep, we can understand how deeply it would have impressed on his mind the fact that his Lord when "put to death in the flesh" had been "quickened in the spirit," and had "preached to the spirits in prison" (1 Pet. iii. 19), so that glad tidings were proclaimed even to the dead (1 Pet. iv. 6). Who they were that thus appeared, we are not told. Most commentators have followed—somewhat unhappily, I venture to believe—the lead of the Apocryphal Gospel just named, and have identified them with the Patriarchs and Prophets of the Old Testament. It is clear, however, that St. Matthew's statement implies that they were those who came out of the opened graves, who had been buried, that is, in the sepulchres of Jerusalem; and, remembering that the term "saints" was applied almost from the very first to the collective body of disciples (Acts ix. 13; 32, 41), it seems more natural to see in them those who, believing in Jesus, had passed to their rest before His crucifixion. On this supposition, their appearance met the feeling, sure to arise among those who were looking for an immediate manifestation of the kingdom—as it arose afterwards at Thessalonica (1 Thess. iv. 13)—that such as had so died were shut out from their share in that kingdom; and we have thus an adequate reason for their appearance, so that friends and kindred might not sorrow for them as others who had no hope. The statement that they did not appear till after our Lord's resurrection, is from this point of view significant. The disciples were thus taught to look on that resurrection, not as an isolated phenomenon, but as the "firstfruits" of the victory over death (1 Cor. xv. 20), in which not they themselves only, but those also whom they had loved and lost were to be sharers.

(54) **Truly this was the Son of God.**—St. Luke's report softens down the witness thus borne into "Truly this Man was righteous." As reported by St. Matthew and St. Mark (xv. 39), the words probably meant little more than that. We must interpret them from the stand-point of the centurion's knowledge, not from that of Christian faith, and to him the words "Son of God" would convey the idea of one who was God-like in those elements of character which are most divine—righteousness, and holiness, and love. The form of expression was naturally determined by the words which he had heard bandied to and fro as a taunt (verse 43); and the centurion felt that the words, as he understood them, were true, and not false, of the Sufferer whose death he had witnessed. That the words might have such a sense in the lips even of a devout Jew, we find in the language of a book probably contemporary, and possibly written with some remote reference to our Lord's death—the so-called *Wisdom of Solomon* (Wisd. ii. 13, 16—18). In the last of these verses, it will be noted, the terms "just man" and "son of God" appear as interchangeable.

(55) **Many women were there beholding.**—The group was obviously distinct from that of "the daughters of Jerusalem," of Luke xxiii. 28, but was probably identical with that mentioned in Luke viii. 2, 3, as accompanying our Lord in many of His journeyings.

(56) **Mary Magdalene.**—This is the first mention of the name in St. Matthew. The most natural explanation of it is that she came from the town of Magdala, or Magadan (the reading of the chief MSS.), not far from Tiberias, on the western side of the Sea of Galilee. The two prominent facts in her history prior to her connection with the Resurrection are, (1) that our Lord had cast "seven devils out of her" (Mark xvi. 9, Luke viii. 2)—*i.e.*, had freed her from some specially aggravated form

James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children. (57) When the even was come,[a] there came a rich man of Arimathæa, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: (58) he went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. (59) And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, (60) and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed. (61) And there was Mary

[a] Mark 15. 42: Luke 23. 50: John 19. 38.

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of demoniacal possession—and that she followed Him and ministered to Him of her substance. The question whether she was identical (1) with Mary the sister of Lazarus, or (2) with the "woman which was a sinner" of Luke vii. 37, will be better discussed in the Notes on the latter passage. It may be enough to intimate here my conviction that there is not the shadow of any evidence for either identification.

**Mary the mother of James and Joses.**—In St. Mark (xv. 40) she is described as the mother of "James the Less" (or, better, *the Little*) "and Joses," the epithet distinguishing the former from James the son of Zebedee, and possibly also from James the son of Alphæus. She may, however, have been identical with the wife of Clopas (possibly another form of Alphæus) mentioned in John xix. 25 as standing near the cross with the mother of the Lord, and, according to a natural construction of the words, described as her sister. In this case, the word "Little" would attach to the son of that sister. Whether the two names, which occur also in the list of the "brethren of the Lord" (Mark vi. 3), indicate that she was the mother of those brethren, is a point which we have no evidence to settle. The presumption seems to me against it, as on this supposition the "brethren" would be identical with the three sons of Alphæus in the list of the Twelve, a view which we have seen reason to reject (see Note on chap. xii. 46).

**The mother of Zebedee's children.**—St. Mark (xv. 40) gives her name as Salome, and she, and not the wife of Clopas, may, on a perfectly tenable construction of John xix. 25, have been identical with the sister of our Lord's mother there mentioned. St. Luke notes the fact that with the women were those whom he describes as "all His acquaintance," *i.e.*, friends and disciples of, or at that time in, Jerusalem (xxiii. 49).

(57) **A rich man of Arimathæa.**—The place so named was probably identical with the Ramah of 1 Sam. i. 19, the birth-place of the prophet. In 1 Sam. i. 1 the name is given in its uncontracted form as Ramathaim-zophim, and in the LXX. version it appears throughout as Armathaim, in Josephus as Armatha, in 1 Macc. xi. 34 as Ramathem. It was a city of the Jews, in the narrower sense in which that word meant the people of Judæa (Luke xxiii. 51). The site is more or less conjectural, but if we identify the Ramah, or Ramathaim, of 1 Sam. i. 1 with the modern *Nebby Samuel*, about four miles north-west of Jerusalem, we have a position which sufficiently fits in with the circumstances of the history. Of Joseph we are told by St. Mark (xv. 43) that he was "an honourable counsellor," *i.e.*, a member of the Sanhedrin, and that he was looking for the kingdom of God; by St. Luke (xxiii. 50, 51), that he was "a good man, and a just" (see Note on Rom. v. 7 for the distinction between the two words); by St. John (xix. 38), that he was "a disciple, but secretly for fear of the Jews." He was apparently a man of the same class and type of character as Nicodemus, respecting our Lord as a man, admiring Him as a teacher, half-believing in Him as the Christ, and yet, till now, shrinking from confessing Him before men. For us the name has the interest of being one of the few New Testament names connected with our own country. He was sent, it was said, by Philip (the Apostle) to Britain. There, in the legend which mediæval chroniclers delighted to tell, he founded the Church of Glastonbury; and the staff which he stuck into the ground took root and brought forth leaves and flowers, and became the parent of all the Glastonbury thorns from that day to this. We have to place the piercing of the side, narrated by St. John only (xix. 31—37), before Joseph's application.

(58) **He went to Pilate.**—Assuming the death of our Lord to have been soon after the ninth hour (3 P.M.), Joseph would seem to have hastened at once to the Prætorium, and asked Pilate's permission to inter the body. St. Mark records Pilate's wonder that death should have come so soon (xv. 44). In his compliance with the petition we trace, as before, a lingering reverence and admiration. As far as he can, he will help the friends and not the foes of the righteous Sufferer.

(59) **A clean linen cloth.**—The word for "linen cloth," *Sindôn*, points, according to different derivations, to a Sidonian or an Indian fabric. It was probably of the nature of muslin rather than linen, and seems to have been specially used by the Egyptians for folding round their mummies, but sometimes also for the sheet in which a man slept (Herod. ii. 82, 95). In the New Testament it appears only in the account of our Lord's burial and in the strange narrative of Mark xiv. 51.

(60) **Laid it in his own new tomb.**—The garden, or orchard, was therefore the property of Joseph (see Note on verse 33). All the first three Gospels dwell on the fact of its not being, as so many graves were, a natural cavern, but cut, and, as St. Luke's word implies, to some extent, smoothed and polished. Like almost all Eastern graves, it was an opening made in the vertical face of the rock. Neither of the two localities which have been identified with the sepulchre (see Note as above) presents this feature, and, so far as this is not an argument against the identity of either with the actual tombs, we must assume that the rock has been so cut and shaped in the course of centuries as to lose its original form. St. John (xix. 39) notes the singularly interesting fact that Nicodemus shared with him in these reverential offices. The hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes which he brought must have been bought beforehand, and may have been stored up from the time when he knew that the leading members of the Council had resolved upon the death of Jesus. St. Luke and St. John give the reason for the speed with which the entombment was hurried on. It was now near sunset. The Sabbath was on the point of beginning, and there was no alternative but that of leaving the body on the cross for another twenty-four hours, and this, though common enough as a Roman practice (which commonly, indeed, left the corpse for birds of prey to feed on), would have shocked Jewish feeling, especially at the Paschal season, as a violation of their law (Deut. xxi. 23).

(61) **And there was Mary Magdalene.**—The

Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

(62) Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, (63) saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. (64) Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. (65) Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make *it* as sure as ye can. (66) So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—(1) In the end of the sabbath,[a] as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week, came

A.D. 33.

[a] Mark 16. 1; John 20. 1.

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words imply that they remained by the cross while the body was taken down, and watched its entombment: then returning to the house where they lodged, they prepared their spices and ointment before the Sabbath began, for a more complete embalmment, so that they might be ready by the earliest hour of dawn on the first day of the week (Luke xxiii. 56).

(62) **The next day, that followed the day of the preparation.**—The narrative that follows is peculiar to St. Matthew, and, like the report of the rending of the veil of the Temple, may, perhaps, be traced to the converted priests of Acts vi. 7. This was, as we find from what follows, the Sabbath. The "preparation" (*Paraskeuè*) was a technical term, not, as is sometimes said, in reference to preparing for the Passover, but, as in Mark xv. 42, to a preparation for the Sabbath (Jos. *Ant.* xvi. 6, § 2, is decisive on this point), and the use of the term here leaves the question whether the Last Supper or the Crucifixion coincided with the Passover, still an open one. It may be noted that the Jewish use of the term passed into the Christian Church, and that at least as early as Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* vii. § 76) it was the received name for the *Dies Veneris*, or Friday, the anniversary of the Crucifixion being the "great" or "holy" *Paraskeuè*. On either view, however, there is something strange in the way in which St. Matthew describes the day as coming, "after the preparation," instead of saying simply, "the Sabbath." It is a possible solution of the difficulty thus presented, on the assumption that the Last Supper was a true Passover, that the day of the Crucifixion as being on the Passover, was itself technically a Sabbath (Lev. xxiii. 7, 24). Two Sabbaths therefore came together, and this may have led the Evangelist to avoid the commoner phrase, and to describe the second as being "the day that followed the preparation," *i.e.* the ordinary weekly Sabbath. The precise time at which the priests went to Pilate is not stated; probably it was early on the morning of the Sabbath when they had heard from the Roman soldiers of the burial by Joseph of Arimathæa. The fact that the body was under the care of one who was secretly a disciple aroused their suspicions, and they would naturally take the first opportunity, even at the risk of infringing on the Sabbath rest, of guarding against the fraud which they suspected.

(63) **We remember that that deceiver said . . .**—It appears, then, that though they had deliberately stirred up the passions of the people by representing the mysterious words of John ii. 14 as threatening a literal destruction of the Temple (chap. xxvi. 61, xxvii. 40), they themselves had understood, wholly or in part, their true meaning. We are, perhaps, surprised that they should in this respect have been more clear-sighted than the disciples, but in such a matter sorrow and disappointment confuse, and suspicion sharpens the intellect.

**That deceiver.**—They had used the cognate verb of Him before (John vii. 12), and this was, perhaps, their usual way of speaking of Him.

(64) **Until the third day.**—The phrase is worth noting as indicating the meaning which the priests attached to the words "after three days." They were looking for the fraud which they anticipated as likely to be attempted at the beginning of the third day from the death.

**The last error.**—Better, *deceit,* to connect the word, in English as in the Greek, with the "deceiver" of verse 63.

(65) **Ye have a watch.**—Better, *Take ye a guard.* The Greek verb may be either imperative or indicative. The former gives the better meaning. The "watch," or "guard," was a body of Roman soldiers (St. Matthew uses the Latin term *custodia*), who could not be set to such a task without Pilate's permission. If the priests had had such a "guard" at their disposal before, there would have been no need for them to apply to Pilate.

(66) **Sealing the stone.**—The opening of the tomb had been already closed by the stone which had been rolled so as to fill, or nearly fill, it. The sealing was probably effected by drawing one or more ropes across the stone and fastening either end to the rock with wax or cement of some kind.

**And setting a watch.**—Better, *with the guard.* What is meant is that the priests were not content to leave the work to the soldiers, but actually took part in it themselves.

## XXVIII.

(1) It will probably help the student to place before him, in their right order, the recorded appearances of our Lord Jesus after His resurrection:—

(1.) To Mary Magdalene, John xx. 14; Mark xvi. 9.

(2.) To Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, Matt. xxviii. 9.

(3.) To Peter, Luke xxiv. 34; 1 Cor. xv. 5.

(4.) To Cleopas and another disciple at Emmaus, Luke xxiv. 13—35.

(5.) To the eleven, or more strictly, the ten Apostles at Jerusalem, Mark xvi. 14; Luke xxiv. 36; John xx. 19.

(6.) To the eleven Apostles at Jerusalem, John xx. 26.

(7.) To the disciples—five named, and others—by the Sea of Galilee, John xxi. 1—24.

(8.) To the Eleven on a mountain in Galilee, Matt. xxviii. 16; Mark xvi. 15.

(9.) To the five hundred brethren, possibly identical with (8), 1 Cor. xv. 6.

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. (2) And, behold, there was[1] a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. (3) His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: (4) and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead *men*. (5) And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. (6) He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. (7) And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. (8) And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

(9) And as they went to tell his dis-

[1] Or, *had been.*

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(10.) To James the brother of the Lord, 1 Cor. xv. 7.

(11.) To the Eleven at Jerusalem before the Ascension, Mark xvi. 19, 20; Luke xxiv. 50; Acts i. 3—12.

**In the end of the sabbath.**—Literally, *late on the Sabbath;* St. Mark, "when the Sabbath was over;" St. Luke, "very early in the morning." St. Matthew's addition, "as it began to dawn," brings his narrative into harmony with St. Luke's. The order of facts appears to have been as follows:—(1.) Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, the mother of James the Little, watched the burial just before the Sabbath began on the evening of the day of the crucifixion. (2.) They stayed at home during the twenty-four hours of the Sabbath. (3.) On the evening of that day (the Sabbath-rest being over) they bought spices for the embalmment. (4.) At earliest dawn, say about 4 A.M., they set out to make their way to the sepulchre, and they reached it when the sun had risen (Mark xvi. 2).

(2) **There was a great earthquake.**—The words imply, not that they witnessed the earthquake, but that they inferred it from what they saw. The form of the angel is described in Mark xvi. 5 as that of a "young man" in white or bright (Luke xxiv. 4) raiment. This was the answer to the question they had been asking as they came, "Who shall roll away the stone for us?" (Mark xvi. 3). That would have been beyond their strength.

(3) **Like lightning.**—The word employed by St. Luke to describe the "raiment" has the same force. The "white as snow" has its counterpart in the record of the Transfiguration (Mark ix. 3) and the vision of the Ancient of Days in Dan. vii. 9.

(4) **The keepers did shake.**—The words imply that the two Maries when they reached the sepulchre saw the soldiers prostrate in their panic terror.

(5) **The angel answered and said . . . .**—We do not read of any words as spoken by the women, but the words which they now heard were an answer to their unuttered questionings and fears. The bright one on whom they gazed knew their distress and amazement at the sight of the emptied sepulchre, and told them that there was no cause for fear.

(6) **He is not here.**—It is not given to us to fix the precise moment when the grave was opened and the risen Lord came forth from it, but the indications point to the time at or about sunrise. There was an obvious fitness in the symbolism of the Resurrection of the Son of Righteousness coinciding with the natural "dayspring." (Comp. Luke i. 78.)

**Come, see the place.**—Comp. the description in John xx. 5, 6, the "linen clothes," or bandages, that had swathed the limbs, the napkin, or *sudarium*, that had veiled the face.

The report in St. Mark (xvi. 6, 7) nearly coincides with this. St. Luke is somewhat fuller (xxiv. 5—7), introducing the question, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" and a more detailed reference to our Lord's prophecies of His resurrection.

(7) **He goeth before you into Galilee.**—The words seem to point to a meeting in Galilee as the first appearance of the risen Lord to His disciples, and St. Matthew records no other. No adequate explanation can be given of the omission of what the other Gospels report, if we assume the whole Gospel to have been written by the Apostle Matthew. On the hypothesis that it is a "Gospel *according* to Matthew," representing the substance of his oral teaching, the absence of this or that fact which we should have expected him to record may have been due to some idiosyncrasy in the scribe, or, so to speak, editor of the Gospel. It is possible that if the disciples had believed the report brought by the women, the mountain in Galilee would have been the scene of the first meeting between them and their Master; but they did not believe, and required the evidence which He in His compassion gave them, in order to quicken their faith and lead them to obey the command thus given.

(8) **They departed quickly.**—It is natural that independent narratives, given long years afterwards, of what had passed in the agitation of "fear and great joy" should present seeming, or even real, discrepancies as well as coincidences. The discrepancies, such as they are, at any rate, show that the narratives were independent. The best solution of the questions presented by a comparison of the Gospel narrative at this stage is that Mary Magdalene ran eagerly to tell Peter and John, leaving the other Mary and Joanna (Luke xxiv. 10), and then followed in the rear of the two disciples (John xx. 2). Then when they had left, the Lord showed Himself first to her (John xx. 14), and then to the others (Matt. xxviii. 9), whom she had by that time joined, and then they all hastened together to tell the rest of the disciples.

(9) **All hail.**—Literally, *rejoice.* The word was probably our Lord's wonted greeting to the company of devout women, and though used in homage, real or derisive, as in chap. xxvii. 29, John xix. 3, had not necessarily the solemnity which modern usage has attached to "hail." It was, we may believe, by that familiar word and tone that the other women at first recognised their Lord, as Mary Magdalene had done by His utterance of her own name.

**Held him by the feet.**—Better, *clasped His feet.* Mary Magdalene had, we must remember, already heard the words "Touch Me not" (John xx. 17), but, if we suppose her to have rejoined the other women, ciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. (10) Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

(11) Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. (12) And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, (13) saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him *away* while we slept. (14) And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. (15) So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

(16) Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. (17) And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. (18) And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

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passionate and rejoicing love carried her, as it carried the others, beyond the limits of reverential obedience.

**Worshipped him.**—The word does not necessarily imply a new form of homage. The prostration which it indicates had been practised before (chaps. viii. 2; ix. 18); though (it is right to add) by many persons not connected with the apostolic company, who came with definite petitions. It was the natural attitude of a suppliant servant before his master (chap. xviii. 26). It was, perhaps, not till later that the disciples were led to feel that the attitude was one that was due to God and to the Man Christ Jesus, and to no other of the sons of men (Acts x. 26) or angels (Rev. xxii. 9). (See Note on verse 17.)

(10) **Go, tell my brethren.**—The words are clearly used of those who were brethren by spiritual relationship, as in chap. xii. 49, and have their counterpart in John xx. 17, "I ascend to My Father and your Father."

(11) **Some of the watch.**—This incident, like that of the appointment of the guard, is reported by St. Matthew only. As writing primarily for the Jews of Palestine, it was natural that he should take special notice of the rumour which hindered many of them from accepting the fact of the Resurrection, and trace it to its corrupt source. The object of the soldiers was, of course, to escape the penalty which they were likely to incur for seeming negligence, but their statement to the priests was at first a truthful one. They told "all the things that were done"—the earthquake, the opened and emptied sepulchre, perhaps also of the form in bright raiment that had filled them with speechless terror.

(12) **When they were assembled.**—Obviously the chief priests to whom the soldiers had told their tale.

**And had taken counsel.**—Better, as before in xxvii. 1, 7, *having held a council.* It was a formal, though probably, as before, a packed, meeting of the Sanhedrin. They decided on the ready expedients of bribery and falsehood. The fact that the chief priests were Sadducees, and therefore specially interested in guarding against what would appear as a contradiction of their main dogma, must not be forgotten, as in part determining their action. (Comp. Acts iv. 42.)

(13) **His disciples came by night.**—The story was on the face of it self-contradictory. How could they tell, if they had been asleep, who had stolen the body? All that they could know was that they had fallen asleep, and that when they awoke the sepulchre was open and empty.

(15) **This saying is commonly reported.**—The passage is interesting as the earliest indication of a counter-statement to the witness borne by the disciples, and as in part explaining the partial non-acceptance of their testimony. The phrase "until this day" suggests some considerable interval—say, at least, fifteen or twenty years—between the facts recorded and the composition of the narrative. (See Note on chap. xxvii. 8.) Justin Martyr mentions the report as current among the Jews of his time, the Jews having sent "chosen men" into all parts of the world to propagate it (*Dial. c. Tryph.* c. 108).

(16) **Then the eleven disciples.**—The writer passes over, for some reason which we cannot now discover, all the intermediate appearances, and passes on at once to that which connected itself with the mission and work of the Apostles, and through them of the universal Church.

**Into a mountain.**—Better, to *the* mountain. The words imply some more definite announcement than that of verses 7 and 10, and therefore, probably, some intermediate meeting. We may think of the mountain as being one that had been the scene of former meetings between the Master and His disciples. They had seen Him there before, in the body of His humiliation. They were now to see Him in the body of His glory. (Comp. Phil. iii. 21.)

(17) **They worshipped him**—*i.e.*, fell prostrate at His feet. The act, as has been said, was not new in itself, but it seems certain that our Lord's manifestations of His Presence after the Resurrection had made the faith of the disciples stronger and clearer (comp. John xx. 28), and so the act acquired a new significance.

**Some doubted.**—It seems hard at first to conceive how those who had been present in the upper chamber at Jerusalem (John xx. 19—26) could still feel doubt; but the narrative of John xxi. 4 throws some light upon it. There was something mysterious and supernatural in the manifestation of the glorified body—outlines, at first indistinct and scarcely recognised, and then the whole form seen as it had been seen in life. The more devoted and loving disciples were probably, here as before, the first to recognise their Lord. Others questioned whether it was a phantom (comp. Notes on chap. xiv. 26) or a reality.

(18) **All power is given unto me.** — Literally, *all authority was given,* the tense used being that in which men speak of something that occurred at a given point of time. We may possibly connect it with St. Paul's use of the same tense in the Greek of Phil. ii. 8. The exaltation came, the authority was given, as at the moment of the Resurrection, and as the crown of His obedience unto death.

(19) Go ye therefore, and teach all nations,[a] baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (20) teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

[a] Mark 16. 15.

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(19) **Teach all nations.**—Better, *make disciples of all the heathen.* The Greek verb is the same as that which is rendered "instructed" in chap. xiii. 52, and is formed from the noun for "disciple." The words recognise the principle of a succession in the apostolic office. The disciples, having learnt fully what their Master, their Rabbi, had to teach them, were now to become in their turn, as scribes of the kingdom of heaven, the teachers of others. It is, to say the least, suggestive that in this solemn commission, stress should be laid on the teaching, rather than on what is known as the sacerdotal element, of the Christian ministry; but the inference that that element is altogether excluded requires to be balanced by a careful study of the words of John xx. 23, which seem at first sight to point in an opposite direction. (See Note on John xx. 23.)

The words rendered "all nations" are the same as those in chap. xxv. 32. and, as commonly used by the Jews, would point to the Gentile *nations* of the world, as distinguished from the *people* of Israel. They are therefore an emphatic expansion of the commission given in chap. x. 5. And it is every way interesting that this full declaration of the universality of the Gospel should be specially recorded in the Gospel written, as we see throughout, specially for Jews.

**Baptizing them in the name of the Father.**—We have to deal (1) with the form, (2) with the substance. As regards (1) we have to explain why, with this command so recently given, the baptisms recorded in the Acts (ii. 38; x. 48; xix. 5), and referred to in the Epistles (Rom. vi. 3; Gal. iii. 27), are in (or rather, *into*) "the name of the Lord Jesus," or "of Christ." What has been noted as to the true meaning of the word "nations" seems the best solution of the difficulty which thus presents itself. It was enough for converts from the house of Israel, already of the family of God, to be baptised into the name of Jesus as the Messiah, as the condition of their admission into the Church which He had founded. By that confession they gave a fresh life to doctrines which they had partially received before, and belief in the Father and the Spirit was virtually implied in their belief in Jesus as the incarnate Son. For the heathen the case stood otherwise. They had worshipped "gods many and lords many" (1 Cor. viii. 5), had been "without God in the world" (Eph. ii. 12), and so they had not known the Father. (2) There remains the question, What is meant by being baptised "into a name"? The answer is to be found in the fact so prominent in the Old Testament (*e.g.* Ex. iii. 14, 15), that the Name of God is a revelation of what He is. Baptism was to be no longer, as it had been in the hands of John as the forerunner, merely a symbol of repentance, but was the token that those who received it were brought into an altogether new relation to Him who was thus revealed to them. The union of the three names in one formula (as in the benediction of 2 Cor. xiii. 14) is in itself a proof at once of the distinctness and equality of the three Divine Persons. We cannot conceive of a command given to, and adopted by, the universal Church to baptise all its members in the name (not "the names") of God and a merely human prophet and an impersonal influence or power.

(20) **All things whatsoever I have commanded you.**—The words obviously point, in the first instance, to the teaching of our Lord recorded in the Gospels—the new laws of life, exceeding broad and deep, of the Sermon on the Mount, the new commandment of Love for the inner life (John xiii. 34), the new outward ordinances of Baptism and the Supper of the Lord. But we may well believe that they went further than this, and that the words may cover much unrecorded teaching which they had heard in the darkness, and were to reproduce in light (chap. x. 27).

**I am with you alway.**—Literally, *all the days*, or, *at all times;* the words emphasising continuity more than the English adverb. The "days" that were coming might seem long and dark and dreary, but He, their Lord, would be with them, in each of those days, even to the far-off end.

**Even unto the end of the world.**—Literally, *of the age.* The phrase is the same as that in chaps. xiii. 39, 40, 49; xxiv. 13. In Heb. ix. 26 it is used of the time of the appearance of Christ in the flesh, as the beginning of the last age of the world. Like all such words, its meaning widens or contracts according to our point of view. Here the context determines its significance as stretching forward to the end of the age, or æon, which began with the first Advent of the Christ and shall last until the second.

We ask, as we close the Gospel, why it ends thus? why there should be no record of a fact so momentous as the Ascension? The question is one which we cannot fully answer. There is an obvious abruptness in the close of the book as a book. It may be that it was left unfinished. It may be that the fact of the Ascension entered into the elementary instruction of every catechumen, and was therefore taken for granted; or that it was thought of as implied in the promise of Christ's perpetual presence; or, lastly, that that promise seemed, in its grandeur and its blessedness, to be the consummation of all that Christ had come to accomplish, and therefore as the fitting close of the record of His life and work.

# EXCURSUS ON NOTES TO ST. MATTHEW.

## I.—ON THE HISTORY OF OUR LORD'S LIFE TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF HIS MINISTRY (Matt. iii.).

A brief review of the events that affected more or less directly the human life of the Christ will, it is believed, be helpful to most readers. Of the early childhood we have no record but the simple statement that "the Child grew, and waxed strong, being filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him" (Luke ii. 40). Outwardly, we must believe, it presented no startling features. There was the simple life of home, and in due course the lessons given in the synagogue, and the worship of the Sabbath, and the habits of a devout household. The annual pilgrimage of Joseph and Mary to keep the Passover at Jerusalem (Luke ii. 41) would be the one conspicuous break in the year's routine of labour in the carpenter's shop at Nazareth. At the age of twelve (A.D. 8) there was the first manifest unfolding of the higher life (see Luke ii. 49), but, so far as we know, it stood absolutely alone, and the growth was quiet and orderly as before. Only in the absolute sinlessness, in the absence of the faults of childhood, could that growth have differed from the growth of other children of the same time and place. He too was subject to His parents, and worked with Joseph as a carpenter. And in that home (the question who they were being still reserved) were also the "brothers" of the Lord—James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas (Matt. xiii. 55), and His sisters. The death of Joseph must have left Him, in the common course of things, as the head of the household, and we may believe that the other members of it, more and more, looked to Him for guidance, and depended upon Him for their support. It is at least probable that the yearly visits to Jerusalem were not intermitted, and that He who was made "under the Law," gave the same proofs of His obedience to it as were given by every devout Israelite. Partly as claiming descent from David, partly from the devout habits of His own life and that of His reputed father, He must have been prominent in the small community of Nazareth, and probably exercised the function commonly assigned to devout laymen, of reading the Sabbath lessons in the synagogue (Luke iv. 16). Thus much we may venture to picture to ourselves of the outward life. Of the veil that shrouds the growth of the inward life we may hardly dare to lift a corner. Prayer to His Father in Heaven, in part (with the one necessary exception) after the manner of the prayer which He afterwards taught His disciples, the patient expectation that waited till His hour should come, gentle and loving care for His mother and His brethren, not without the power to reprove when reproof was necessary, delight in the solitude of the hills, the changing aspect of the skies, and the beauty of the flowers of the field, all these made up a life of harmony and noble holiness. But as it passed on, it hardly appeared likely to be more than this. The very tranquillity of its growth must have made His mother's heart sink within her, as with the sickness of hope deferred. It was not till the preaching of the Baptist showed that His hour had come, that there was outwardly more than the life of a man of the peasant class, of blameless purity and intense devotion.

In the mean time events were passing round Him, which more or less affected those whom His ministerial work was afterwards to embrace. Archelaus, after the massacre referred to in the Note on chap. iii. 22, went to Rome to defend himself before the Emperor against the charge of cruelty, and to maintain his right to the kingdom against the claims of Antipas. Augustus, true to the balancing policy of Roman rule, made Antipas Tetrarch of Galilee, and Archelaus Ethnarch of Judæa. The latter ruled with as much cruelty as ever. Complaints again multiplied, and in A.D. 6 he was deposed and banished to Gaul, and Judæa, as a Roman province, was placed under the direct government of a Procurator. The immediate effect of this was to move the dormant fanaticism of a population who fondly flattered themselves that they had "never been in bondage to any man," and when the census taken at the time of our Lord's birth was followed by actual taxation (the "tribute" or poll-tax of Matt. xxii. 17), the discontent broke out in the revolt of Judas of Gamala, commonly known as "of Galilee" (Acts v. 37). That province furnished the greater part of his adherents, and they took as their watchword, "We have no master but God," and refused to pay tribute. The insurrection was suppressed, Judas himself slain, and his followers dispersed; but the party was not extinct, and Josephus writing seventy years afterwards, in the time of Vespasian and Titus, enumerates it, together with Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, among the four sects of the Jews (*Ant.* xviii. 1, § 1). The question put by the Pharisees and Herodians, "Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar?" was one which must have been often discussed in Nazareth and the neighbouring villages from the time of our Lord's childhood. The policy of the Tetrarch of Galilee led him, on the other hand, to court the favour of Rome. The new town of Tiberias (built A.D. 18), the new name, the Sea of Tiberias, which it gave to the Lake of Galilee, bore witness of Herod's adulation of the Emperor who had succeeded Augustus in A.D. 14. Coming nearer to the time of the commencement of our Lord's ministry we may note the Tetrarch's divorce of his first wife, the daughter of Aretas; his incestuous and adulterous marriage with Herodias, the daughter of his brother Aristobulus, and the wife of his brother Philip; and the war with Aretas in which this act involved him. The government of Judæa, after the deposition of Archelaus, under five successive Procurators, presented no events of any striking importance, but in A.D. 25—26 we come to the more memorable name of Pontius Pilate. One of his first acts was to remove the Roman garrison from Cæsarea to Jerusalem, and the troops were accordingly stationed in the Tower of Antonius, which rose (as we see in Acts xxi. 34, 35) from the precincts of the Temple. They brought with them the standards that bore the image of the Emperor, and this roused the population to a white heat of fury, to which Pilate at last yielded (Jos. *Ant.* xviii. 3, § 1). Other provocations, however, followed. Gilt shields bearing the names of heathen deities were suspended in the Procurator's palace at Jerusalem, and were only removed by a special order from Tiberius. The consecrated Corban, or treasure of the Temple, was employed for the construction of an aqueduct, and the riot that followed (probably the insurrection which made Barabbas the hero of the people) was only suppressed by Pilate's sending into the crowd soldiers in disguise, armed with concealed daggers, who massacred both rioters and unoffending spectators (Jos. *Wars*, ii. 9, § 4). It is probable that the slaughter of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices (Luke xiii. 1), was connected with this outbreak. Such was the state of things when the voice of the Baptist was heard in the wilderness of Judæa. In the mean time the influence of Roman rule was seen in language, government, customs, in the employment of the publicans, in the centurions stationed with their troops at Capernaum, in the adoption of Roman manners at the feasts of the Tetrarch's Court, in the forced service to which the peasants of Galilee were subject, in the frequent use of the Roman punishment of scourging, in the crosses upon which rebels and robbers were exposed in shameful nakedness to die the most agonising of all forms of death.

## II.—THE WORD "DAILY," IN MATT. VI. 11.

The word *ἐπιούσιος* has been derived (1) from *ἡ ἐπιοῦσα* (*sc. ἡμέρα*) = the day that is coming on; and this meaning is favoured by the fact that Jerome says that the Hebrew Gospel current in his time gave the word *mahar* (= *crastinus*) to-morrow's bread, and by the very early rendering, *quotidianum*, in the Latin versions. On the other hand, this meaning introduces a strange tautology into St. Luke's version of the prayer, "Give us day by day—*i.e.*, daily—our daily bread." (2) The other derivation connects it with *οὐσία* in some one or other of its many senses, and with *ἐπὶ* as signifying either "for" or "over"—the former force of the preposition suggesting the thought "for our existence or subsistence;" the latter, the *supersubstantialis* of Jerome, that is, "over or above our material substance" It is said, and with truth, that in classical Greek the form would have been not *ἐπιούσιος*, but *ἐπούσιος*; but it is clear that that difficulty did not prevent a scholar like Jerome from accepting the derivation, and it was not likely that the Hellenistic Jew who first translated our Lord's discourses should be more accurate than Jerome in coining a word which seemed to him wanted to express our Lord's meaning. The derivation being then admissible, it remains to ask which of the two meanings of *οὐσία* and of *ἐπὶ* gives most force to the clause in which the word occurs, and for the reasons given above I am led to decide in favour of the latter. New words would hardly have been wanted for the meanings "daily" or "sufficient." When a word is coined, it may fairly be assumed that it was wanted to express a new thought, and the new thought here was that which our Lord afterwards developed in John vi., that the spirit of a man needs sustenance not less than his body, and that that sustenance is found in the "bread of God which cometh down from heaven" (John vi. 33). The student should, however, consult Dr. Lightfoot's admirable excursus on the word in his *Hints on a Revised Version of the New Testament.*

On the assumption that the Lord's Prayer included and spiritualised the highest thoughts that had previously been expressed separably by devout Israelites, we may note, as against the meaning of "bread for the morrow," the saying of Rabbi Elieser, that "He who has a crumb left in his scrip, and asks, 'What shall I eat to-morrow?' belongs to those of little faith."

There is, it must be admitted, a difficulty in conjecturing what Aramaic word could have answered to this meaning of *ἐπιούσιος*, and the fact that a word giving the other meaning is, as it were, ready to hand, and was actually found in the Hebrew Gospel in the fourth century, has some weight on the other side. That word may, however, itself have been not a translation of the original, but a re-translation of the Latin *quotidianus;* and the fact that Jerome, knowing of this, chose another rendering here, while he retained *quotidianus* in St. Luke xi. 3, shows that he was not satisfied with it, and at last, it may be, halted between two opinions.

## III.—DEMONIAC POSSESSION (Matt. viii. 28).

(1.) As to the word, the Greek *δαίμων* (the "knowing," or the "divider") appears in Homer as interchangeable with *Θεός* (God). In the mythology of Hesiod (*Works and Days*, l. 108) we have the first downward step, and the *δαίμονες* are the departed spirits of the men who lived in the first golden age of the world. They are the good genii of Greek religion, averters of evil, guardians of mortal men. The next stage introduced the neuter of the adjective derived from *δαίμων* as something more impersonal, and *τὸ δαιμόνιον* was used by Plato as something "between God and man, by which the former communicates with the latter" (*Symp.*, p. 202), and in this sense Socrates spoke of the inward oracle whose warning he obeyed, as his *δαιμόνιον*, and was accordingly accused of bringing in the worship of new *δαιμόνια*, whom the State had not recognised. The fears of men led them, however, to connect these unknown intermediate agents with evil as well as good. The *δαίμων* of the Greek tragedians is the *evil* genius of a family, as in the case of that of Agamemnon. A man is said to be under its power when he is swayed by some uncontrollable, frenzied passion that hurries him into guilt and misery.

Such were the meanings that had gathered round the word when the Greek translators of the Old Testament entered on their task. They, as was natural, carefully avoided using it in any connection that would have identified it with the God of Israel. It appears in Ps. xc. 3, where the English version gives "destruction;" in Deut. xxxii. 17, and Ps. cvi. 37, where the

English version has "devils," and in this sense it accordingly passed into the language of the Hellenistic Jews, and so into that of the writers of the Gospels. So St. Paul speaks of the gods whom the heathen worshipped as δαιμόνια (1 Cor. x. 20).

(2.) As to the phenomena described, the belief of later Judaism ascribed to "demons," in the sense which the word has thus acquired, many of the more startling forms of bodily and mental suffering which the language of modern thought groups under the general head of "disease." Thus, in the history of Tobit, the daughter of Raguel is possessed by the evil spirit Asmodeus, and he slays her seven bridegrooms (Tobit iii. 8). Or passing on to the Gospel records, we find demoniac agency the cause of dumbness (Matt. ix. 32), blindness (Matt. xii. 22), epilepsy (Mark ix. 17—27), or (as here, and Mark v. 1—5) insanity. To "have a devil" is interchangeable with "being mad" (John vii. 20; viii. 48; x. 20, and probably Matt. xi. 18). And this apparently was but part of a more general view, which saw in all forms of disease the work, directly or indirectly, of Satan, as the great adversary of mankind. Our Lord went about "healing all that were oppressed of the devil" (Acts x. 38). "Satan had bound" for eighteen years the woman who was crippled by a spirit of infirmity" (Luke xiii. 16). And these "demons" are described as "unclean spirits" (Matt. x. 1; xii. 43, *et al.*) acting under a "ruler" or "prince," who is popularly known by the name of Beelzebub, the old Philistine deity of Ekron, and whom our Lord identifies with Satan (Matt. xii. 24—26). The Talmud swarms with allusions to such demons as lurking in the air, in food, in clothing, and working their evil will on the bodies or the souls of men. St. Paul, though he refers only once to "demons," in this sense, and then apparently as the authors of false doctrines claiming divine authority, but coming really from "seducing spirits" (1 Tim. iv. 1), seems to see in some forms, at least, of bodily disease the permitted agency of Satan, as in the case of the chastisement inflicted on the incestuous Corinthian (1 Cor. v. 5; 2 Cor. ii. 11), his own "thorn in the flesh" (2 Cor. xii. 7), and possibly in other like hindrances to his work (1 Thess. ii. 18).

(3.) The belief bore its natural fruit among the Jews of our Lord's time. The work of the exorcist became a profession, as in the case of the sons of Sceva at Ephesus (Acts xix. 13). Charms and incantations were used, including the more sacred forms of the divine name. The Pharisees appear to have claimed the power as one of the privileges belonging to their superior holiness (Matt. xii. 27). Josephus narrates that a herb grew at Machærus, the root of which had the power of expelling demons (whom he defines as the spirits of wicked men), and that he had himself beheld, in the presence of Vespasian, a man possessed with a demon, cured by a ring containing a root of like properties. As a proof of the reality of the dispossession, a vessel of water was placed at a little distance from the man, which was overthrown by the unseen demon as he passed out from the man's nostrils (*Wars*, vii. 6, § 3; *Ant.* viii. 2, § 5). The belief as to the demons being "the souls of the dead," lingered in the Christian Church, was accepted by Justin, who, coming from Samaria, probably received it from the Jews (*Apol.* I., i., p. 65), and was recognised as at least a common belief by Chrysostom (*De Lazaro*, I., p. 728).

(4.) Our Lord's treatment of the cases of men thus "possessed with demons" stands out partly as accepting the prevailing belief in its highest aspects, partly as contrasted with it. He uses no spells or charms, but does the work of casting out as by His own divine authority, "with a word." He delegates to the Twelve the power to "cast out demons," as well as to cure diseases (Matt. x. 8); and when the Seventy return with the report that the devils (*i.e.*, demons) were subject unto them in His name, He speaks of that result as a victory over Satan (Luke x. 17, 18). He makes the action of the demons the vehicle for a parable, in which first one and then eight demons are represented as possessing the same man (Matt. xii. 43—45). It may be noted that He nowhere speaks of them, in the language of the later current beliefs of Christendom, as identical with the "fallen angels," or as the souls of the dead, though they are evil spirits subject to the power of Satan.

(5.) It is obvious that many hard questions rise out of these facts. Does our Lord's indirect teaching stamp the popular belief with the seal of His authority? or did He, knowing it to be false, accommodate Himself to their belief, and speak in the only way men were able to understand of His own power to heal, teaching them as they were "able to hear it?" (Mark iv. 33). If we answer the former question in the affirmative, are we to believe that the fact of possession was peculiar to the time and country, and that the "demons" (either as the souls of the dead, or as evil angels) have since been restrained by the influence of Christendom or the power of Christ? or may we still trace their agency in the more obscure and startling phenomena of mental disease, in the *delirium tremens* of the drunkard, in the orgiastic frenzy of some Eastern religions, in homicidal or suicidal mania? And if we go as far as this, is it a true theory of disease in general to assign it, in all cases, to the permitted agency of Satan? and how can we reconcile that belief either with the temper which receives sickness as "God's visitation," or with that which seeks out its mechanical or chemical causes? Wise and good men have answered these questions very differently, and it may be that we have not the *data* for an absolutely certain and exhaustive answer. It is well to remember, on the one hand, that to speak of the phenomena of the Gospel possessions as mania, hysteria, or the like, is to give them a name, but not to assign a cause—that science, let it push its researches into mental disease ever so far, has to confess at last that it stands in the presence of unknown forces, more amenable often to spiritual influences than to any medical treatment; and on the other, that our Lord came to rescue men from the thraldom of frenzy and disease, and so to prepare them for the higher work of spiritual renovation, rather than rudely to sweep away the traditional belief of the people as to their source, or to proclaim a new psychological theory.

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK.

# INTRODUCTION

TO

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK.

I. **The Writer.**—There is but one person of the name of Mark, or Marcus, mentioned in the New Testament, and, in the absence of any evidence, it may reasonably be assumed that the Gospel which bears his name is ascribed to him as being, directly or indirectly, its author. The facts of his life as they are gathered from the New Testament may be briefly put together. He bore also the Hebrew name of John, *i.e.*, Joannes, or Jochanan (Acts xii. 12, 25; xv. 37). The fact that he took a Latin and not a Greek surname suggests the probability of some point of contact with Jews or others connected with Rome. As was natural, when he entered on his work among the Gentiles the new name practically superseded the old, and in the Epistles (Col. iv. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 11; Philem. verse 24; 1 Pet. v. 13) he is spoken of as "Mark" only. He was cousin to Barnabas, and was therefore, on his mother's side probably, of the tribe of Levi (Col. iv. 10; Acts iv. 36). His mother bore the name of Mary, or Miriam, and it may be inferred from the fact that her house served as a meeting-place for the disciples at Jerusalem (Acts xii. 12), that she, like her brother, was one of the prominent and wealthy members of the Apostolic Church. St. Peter speaks of him as his "son" (1 Pet. v. 13), and it is a natural inference from this that he was converted by that Apostle to the new faith, but whether this was during our Lord's ministry on earth or after the day of Pentecost must remain matter for conjecture. When Paul and Barnabas return from Jerusalem to Antioch (Acts xii. 25) he accompanies them, and this may be taken as evidence that his sympathies were at that time with the wider work which they were carrying on among the Gentiles. So, when they were sent forth on their first missionary journey, they chose him as their "minister," or attendant (Acts xiii. 5). His function, as such, was probably to provide for their personal wants in travelling, and to assist in the baptism of new converts. For some unrecorded reason, possibly want of courage, or home-sickness, or over-anxious care about the mother whom he had left at Jerusalem, he drew back at Perga in Pamphylia from the work to which they were sent, and returned home (Acts xiii. 13). We find him, however, again at Antioch, after the council at Jerusalem, and he had so far regained his uncle's confidence that he was willing to take him once more as a companion in his missionary labours (Acts xv. 37—39). To that course, however, St. Paul would not agree, and the result was that the two friends who had so long been fellow-workers in the cause of Christ were divided after a sharp contention.

From this point onwards we get but few glimpses of the writer of the Gospel. He accompanied Barnabas (A.D. 52) in his work among the Jews and Gentiles of Cyprus (Acts xv. 39). About eight years later he was with St. Peter in the city on the banks of the Euphrates which still bore the old name of Babylon, and there must have met Silvanus, or Silas, who had taken his place as the companion and minister of St. Paul (see Note on 1 Pet. v. 12, 13). It is possible that this may have led to a renewal of the old intimacy between him and the Apostle of the Gentiles, and about four years later (A.D. 64) we find him with St. Paul at Rome, during the Apostle's first imprisonment (Col. iv. 10; Philem. verse 24), and there, it may be noted, he must have met his brother Evangelist, St. Luke (Col. iv. 14). He was then, however, on the point of returning to the Asiatic provinces, and contemplated a visit to Colossæ (Col. iv. 10). Two years later (A.D. 66), accordingly, we find him at Ephesus with Timotheus, and the last mention of his name shows that St. Paul had forgotten his former want of steadfastness in the recollection of his recent services, and wished for his presence once again as being "profitable for ministering"* (2 Tim. iv. 11).

To these facts, or legitimate inferences, we may now add the less certain traditions that have gathered round his name. Epiphanius (*Contr. Hær.*) makes him one of the Seventy whose mission St. Luke narrates (x. 1), and says that he was of those who turned back when they heard the hard saying of John vi. 60, 66. Eusebius (*Hist.* ii. 15; vi. 14) states, on the "authority of the ancient elders" and of Clement of Alexandria, that he was with St. Peter at Rome, acting as his "interpreter," or secretary, and that he was sent on a mission from Rome to Egypt (*Hist.* ii. 16). There, according to Jerome (*de Vir. illust.* 8), he founded the Church of Alexandria, became bishop of that church, and suffered martyrdom at the hands of the people on the Feast of Serapis, in the fourteenth year of Nero, A.D. 68, about three years after the death of St. Peter and St. Paul. In A.D. 815 his body was said to have been taken to Venice, and the stately cathedral in the Piazza of St. Mark in that city was dedicated to his memory. Some recent commentators identify him conjecturally with "the young man with the linen cloth round his naked body" of Mark xiv. 51. (See Note on that passage.)

II. **The Authorship of the Gospel.**—St. Mark is named by Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis (*circ.* A.D. 169), on the authority of a certain "John the Presbyter," as writing down exactly, in his character as Peter's interpreter, "whatever things he remembered, but not in the order in which Christ spoke or did them, for he was neither a follower nor hearer of the Lord's, but was afterwards a follower of Peter." The statement is probable enough in itself (Euseb. *Hist.* iii. 39), and receives some additional weight from the fact that the city of which Papias was Bishop was in the same district as Colossæ, which Mark, as we have seen, meant to visit (Col. iv. 10). In another passage, above referred to, Eusebius (*Hist.* ii. 15; v. 8) speaks of him as having been asked to write by the hearers of St. Peter at Rome, and that the Apostle at first acquiesced in, and afterwards sanctioned his doing so. The same tradition appears (A.D. 160-225) in Tertullian (*Cont. Marc.* iv. 5). It receives some confirmation from the language of the second Epistle ascribed to St. Peter. The Apostle there promises that he will "endeavour" that those to whom he writes may have these things (*i.e.*, the facts and truths of the gospel) in remembrance, that they might know that they had not "followed cunningly-devised fables," but were trusting those who had been eye-witnesses, at the Transfiguration and elsewhere, of the majesty of Christ (2 Pet. i. 15, 16). Such a promise seems almost to pledge the Apostle to the composition of some kind of record. Mark, we have seen, was with him when he wrote his first Epistle, perhaps also when he wrote the second, and it would be natural that he should take down from his master's lips, or write down afterwards from memory, what he had heard from him. It may be added that the comparatively subordinate position occupied by St. Mark in the New Testament records makes it improbable that his name should have been chosen as the author of a book which he did not really write. A pseudonymous writer would have been tempted to choose (let us say) Peter himself, not Peter's attendant and interpreter.

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* This rather than "for the ministry" is the sense of the Greek.

The Gospel itself, we may add, supplies some internal evidence in favour of this hypothesis :—(1.) It differs from St. Matthew, with which to a great extent it runs parallel in the facts narrated, in giving at every turn graphic descriptive touches which suggest the thought that they must have come in the first instance from an eye-witness. These are noticed in detail in the Notes on the Gospel, and here it will be enough to mention a few of the more striking instances. Thus, *e.g.*, we have (*a*) the "very early in the morning, while it was yet night," of i. 35, as compared with "when it was day" in Luke iv. 42; (*b*) there being no room, "not so much as about the door," in ii. 2; (*c*) the "taking off the roof and digging a hole in it" in ii. 4; (*d*) the "making a path by plucking the ears of corn" in ii. 23; (*e*) the "looking round with anger" in iii. 5; (*f*) the "taking Him, even as He was, into the ship," and the "lying in the stern on the pillow" (iv. 36, 38); (*g*) the account of the manner in which the Gadarene demoniac had "burst asunder" his chains and "worn away" his fetters (v. 4), and how he was "in the mountains crying and cutting himself with stones" (v. 5); (*h*) the "green grass," and the "sitting in ranks and companies by hundreds and by fifties" (vi. 39, 40); (*i*) the "exceeding white as snow so as no fuller on earth can whiten them" (ix. 3); (*j*) the "Jesus beholding him, loved him" of the young ruler (x. 21); (*k*) the "young man with the linen cloth round his naked body" (xiv. 51); and many others of a like character. (2.) As pointing to the same direction, we may note the instances in which St. Mark, and he alone, reproduces the very syllables which our Lord uttered in Aramaic. Whether they were an exception to His usual mode of speech or not may be an open question, but as connected with His works of healing they had the character of words of power for those who heard them, and so fixed themselves in their memories. So we have the TALITHA CUMI of v. 41, the EPHPHATHA of vii. 34, the RABBONI in the Greek of x. 51, the BOANERGES of iii. 17, the ABBA of xiv. 36, the CORBAN of vii. 11, and, though here in common with St. Matthew, the ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI of xv. 34. (3.) So, too, in a few cases, St. Mark gives names where the other Gospels do not give them: Levi is the son of Alphæus (ii. 14); the ruler of the Synagogue, not named by St. Matthew, is Jairus (v. 22); the blind beggar at Jericho is Bartimæus, the son of Timæus (x. 46); the mother of James and John is Salome (xv. 40); Simon the Cyrenian is the father of Alexander and Rufus (xv. 21). (4.) Some have seen grounds for the inference thus suggested in St. Mark's omission of the promise made to Peter in Matt. xvi. 17—19, and of his "weeping *bitterly*" after he had denied his Master, but the proof in this case seems somewhat precarious.

III. **The first readers of the Gospel.**—The position which St. Mark occupied in relation both to St. Paul and St. Peter—his connection with the former being resumed, as we have seen, after a long interval—would make it probable that he would write with a special eye to Gentile rather than Jewish readers; and of this the Gospel itself supplies sufficient evidence in the full explanation of the customs of the Jews as to ablutions and the like in vii. 3, 4, in the explanation of the word Corban in vii. 11, perhaps, also, in his description of "the *river* of Jordan" in i. 5. A closer study suggests the thought, in full agreement with the tradition mentioned above, that he wrote with a special view to Christians of the Roman Church. He alone describes Simon the Cyrenian as the father of Alexander and Rufus (xv. 21), as though that fact had a special interest for his readers. There is but one Rufus mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament, and he meets us in Rom. xvi. 13 as one who was prominent enough in the church of that city for St. Paul to send a special message of remembrance to him; and it may be inferred, with some likelihood, that the wife or widow of Simon of Cyrene (having previously met St. Paul at Corinth, for some personal knowledge is implied in the words "his mother and mine") had settled with her two sons in the imperial city, and had naturally gained a position of some importance. The very name of Marcus indicates, as has been said, some Latin affinities; and it is noticeable, in this connection, that a larger number of words Latin in their origin appear in his Gospel than in any one of the others. Thus we have him giving the Latin *centurio* instead of the Greek ἑκατοντάρχης (*hekatontarches*) in xv. 39, 44, 45; the Latin *speculator* for "executioner" in vi. 27; *grabatus* for bed (this in common with John v. 8, 9, 10) in ii. 4, 9, 11, 12; *quadrans* for "farthing" in xii. 42; a verb formed from the Latin *flagellum* for "scourging" (this in common with Matt. xxvii. 26) in xv. 15; a noun formed from *sextarius* for "vessels" in vii. 4; *Prætorium* (this in common with Matt. xxvii. 27 and John xviii. 28) in xv. 16; the *denarius* in vi. 37, xii. 15, xiv. 5 (this, however, is common to all four Gospels); the *legio* (found also in Matt. xxvi. 53, Luke viii. 30) in v. 9; *census* (found also in Matt. xvii. 25, xxii. 17, 19) in xii. 14.

IV. **The characteristics of the Gospel.**—The distinguishing features of St. Mark's Gospel are, it will be seen, (1) vividness and fulness of detail in narrating the events of the history; (2) compression or omission in dealing with our Lord's discourses. This may have been owing partly to the object which he had in view, writing, it may be, for the instruction of catechumens, for whom he judged this method the most fitting, and partly to the idiosyncrasies of his own character. What we have seen of his life and work would prepare us to accept the latter as, to a great extent, an adequate explanation. One who had been chiefly a "minister" or "attendant" (the latter word is the more accurate rendering of the Greek of Acts xiii. 5) on the two Apostles may well be supposed to have been chiefly distinguished for his activity in service, for the turn of mind which observes and notes particulars, rather than for that which belongs to the student, and delights to dwell on full and developed statements of the Truth. We may see in what he has left us accordingly, pre-eminently the Gospel of Service, that which presents our Lord to us as in the form of a servant, obedient even unto death (Phil. ii. 7, 8); and so far it forms the complement to that in which St. Matthew presents Him to us pre-eminently in His character as a King. Even the characteristic iteration of the ever-recurring "immediately," "anon," "presently," "forthwith," "by-and-by," "straightway"—all representing the self-same Greek word, occurring not less than 41 times—may not unreasonably be connected with his personal experience. That had been, we may believe, a word constantly on his lips in daily life, the law and standard of his own service, and he could not think of his Lord's work otherwise than as exhibiting the perfect fulfilment of that law, a work at once without haste and without pause. So, too, in another point in which he stands in singular contrast to St. Matthew, the almost entire absence of any reference, except in reporting what had been said by our Lord or others, to any prophecies of the Old Testament—there are but two such references in the whole Gospel (i. 2, 3; xv. 28), as rising out of his own reflection—may be explained in part, perhaps, by the fact that he was writing not for Jews, but for Gentiles, to whom those prophecies were not familiar, and also by the fact that his own life in its ceaseless round of humbler service led him to be less than others a student of those prophecies. Assuming the genuineness of the latter of the two passages just referred to (it is absent from nearly all the best MSS.), we may, perhaps, trace the connection of thought. Words from that 53rd chapter of Isaiah had been quoted by the Apostle to whom he ministered (1 Pet. ii. 22, 23), at a time when he was with him, in special connection with the work of servants and the duty of obedience, and so his mind had been called to those words, but there does not appear to have been in him, as there was in St. Matthew, a deliberate purpose to trace the fulfilment of prophetic words in the circumstances of our Lord's life and work. He was content to paint the scenes that passed before his mind clearly and vividly, and to leave the teaching which the facts embodied to do its work on the minds of his readers.

**V. Relation to St. Matthew and St. Luke.**—The Gospels of St. Mark and St. Matthew have so much in common, sometimes with each other only, sometimes with St. Luke also, that it is clear that they must have drawn more or less from a common source. Nothing, however, can be more against the whole tenor of internal evidence than the hypothesis that St. Mark epitomised from St. Matthew, or that St. Matthew expanded from St. Mark. The narrative of the second Gospel is in almost every instance fuller than that of the first, and its brevity is obtained only by the absence of the discourses and parables which occupy so large a portion of the other. On either of these assumptions the perplexing variations in the order of events (see Note on Matt. viii. 1) are altogether inexplicable. What is, with our scanty *data*, the most probable explanation is, that the matter common to both represents the substance of the instruction given orally to disciples in the Church of Jerusalem and other Jewish-Christian communities coming, directly or indirectly, under the influence of St. Peter and St. James, as the Apostles of the Circumcision (Gal. ii. 9). The miracles that had most impressed themselves on the minds of the disciples, the simplest or most striking parables, the narratives of the Passion and Resurrection, would naturally make up the main bulk of that instruction. St. Matthew, the publican Apostle, and therefore conversant, as has been said before, with clerkly culture, writing for his own people, closely connected with James the Bishop of Jerusalem (see *Introduction to St. Matthew*), would naturally be one exponent of that teaching. St. Mark, the disciple and "interpreter," or secretary, of St. Peter, would as naturally be another. That they wrote independently of each other is seen, not only in the details above noted, the addition of new facts, the graphic touches of description, but from variations which would be inexplicable on any other assumption; such, *e.g.*, as Mark's "Dalmanutha" (viii. 10) for Matthew's Magdala (Matt. xv. 39), "Syro-Phœnician woman" (vii. 26) for Canaanite (Matt. xv. 22), "Levi the son of Alphæus" (ii. 14) for Matthew (Matt. ix. 9). Short as the Gospel is, too, there is one parable in it (iv. 26—29), and one miracle (vii. 31—37), which are not found in St. Matthew. It is remarkable, moreover, that there are some incidents which St. Mark and St. Luke have in common, and which are not found in St. Matthew: that of the demoniac in chap. i. 23—27, Luke iv. 33—37; the journey through Galilee (i. 35—39, Luke iv. 42—44); the pursuit of the disciples (i. 36, 37, Luke iv. 42); the prayer of the demoniac (v. 18, Luke viii. 38); the complaint of John against one that cast out devils (ix. 38, Luke ix. 49); the women bringing spices to the sepulchre (xvi. 1, Luke xxiv. 1). Of these phenomena we find a natural and adequate explanation in the fact that the two Evangelists were, at least at one period of their lives, brought into contact with each other (Col. iv. 10, 14, Philem. verse 24). It is probable, as has been said above, that neither wrote his Gospel in its present form until the two great Apostles whom they served had entered on their rest; but when they met each must have had the plan formed and the chief materials collected, and we may well think of them as comparing notes, and of the one, whose life had led to less culture, and whose temperament disposed him to record facts rather than parables or discourses, as profiting by his contact with the other, and while content to adhere to the scope and method which he had before marked out for himself, adding here and there what he learnt from his fellow-worker whose "praise was in the Gospel" (2 Cor. viii. 18). (See *Introduction to St. Luke.*)

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK.

CHAPTER I.—(1) The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; (2) as it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,[a] which shall prepare thy way before thee. (3) The voice of one crying in the wilderness,[b] Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. (4) John did baptize in the wilderness,[c] and preach the baptism of repentance for [1] the remission of sins. (5) And there went out unto him all the land of Judæa,[d] and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins. (6) And John was clothed with camel's hair,[e] and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey; (7) and preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. (8) I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost. (9) And it came to pass in those days,[f] that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. (10) And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened,[2] and the

A.D. 26. ending.

[e] Matt. 3. 4.

[a] Mal. 3. 1.

[b] Isa. 40. 3; Luke 3. 4; John 1. 23.

[c] Matt. 3. 1.

A.D. 27.—

[1] Or, *unto.*

[f] Matt. 3. 13.

[d] Matt. 3. 5.

[2] Or, *cloven,* or, *rent.*

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(1) **The beginning of the gospel.**—The opening words are interesting as presenting a transition stage in the history of the word Gospel, between its earlier sense, as meaning generally the "good news" of the kingdom of God (chap. i. 14; Matt. iv. 23; ix. 35), and the later sense, as a book recording the main facts in our Lord's life and work. In 1 Cor. xv. 1, 2 Tim. ii. 8, where it clearly includes a narrative of some kind, we have an instance of a like transition.

**The Son of God.**—This also is significant as to the Church's faith at the time when St. Mark wrote. He, of whom he speaks, was not a prophet or righteous man only, but was, in the highest sense which could be attached to the words, the Son of God. If we think of St. Mark as reproducing St. Peter's teaching, we cannot fail to connect the words, thus placed, as they are, in the very title of his Gospel, with the Apostle's confession in Matt. xvi. 16.

(2) **In the prophets.**—The better MSS. give the more accurate reference, "in Esaias the prophet." On general grounds, however, it seems more probable that the general reference should have been specialised by a transcriber than the reverse. With one exception, and that very doubtful as to its genuineness (see Note on chap. xv. 28), this is the only quotation from a prophet made by the Evangelist himself in this Gospel. The fact that St. Mark wrote for Gentiles furnishes a partial explanation of his silence in this respect, as compared with the other Gospels. (See *Introduction.*)

**Behold, I send my messenger.**—See Notes on Matt. xi. 10, 11.

(3) **The voice of one crying in the wilderness.**—See Note on Matt. iii. 3.

(4) **John did baptize.**—No other Gospel passes so abruptly, so *in medias res,* into the actual work of the Forerunner. There is no account of the birth or infancy of our Lord, as in St. Matthew and St. Luke; none of the pre-existence of the Son of Man, as in St. John. St. Mark is here, as elsewhere, emphatically the Evangelist of action. (On the rest of the verse, see Notes on Matt. iii. 1.) The special phrase "baptism of repentance"—*i.e.,* the sign of repentance, that which was connected with it, and pre-supposed it—meets us in Luke iii. 3 and Acts xix. 4. In the former passage we find also "forgiveness of sins" as the result of the baptism; and we cannot doubt, therefore, that then, as evermore, repentance was followed by forgiveness, even though the blood which availed for that forgiveness (Matt. xxvi. 28) had not as yet been shed.

(5) **There went out unto him . . . .**—See Note on Matt. iii. 5. Note St. Mark's use of the term "in the river of Jordan," as writing for those who were not familiar with the topography of Palestine.

(6) **And John was clothed . . . .**—See Note on Matt. iii. 4.

(7) **There cometh one mightier than I.**—See Note on Matt. iii. 11; but note the slight difference—not, as there, "whose shoes I am not worthy to bear," but "the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to *stoop down and unloose.*" "Latchet," a word now obsolete, was the "thong" or "lace" with which shoes or sandals were fastened. To stoop down and loosen the sandals was commonly the act of the servant who afterwards carried them, but it expressed more vividly what we should call the menial character of the office, and therefore, we may believe, was chosen by St. Mark. (See *Introduction.*)

(8) **I indeed have baptized you with water.**—See Note on Matt. iii. 11. St. Mark omits the "fire" which St. Matthew joins with the Holy Ghost, possibly as less intelligible to his Gentile readers.

(9) **And it came to pass.**—See Note on Matt. iii. 13. St. Mark adds "from Nazareth" to St. Matthew's more general statement, "from Galilee."

(10) **He saw the heavens opened.**—Better, as in the margin, *rent open,* St. Mark's language here, as

Spirit like a dove descending upon him: (11) and there came a voice from heaven, *saying*, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. (12) And immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness.[a] (13) And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him. (14) Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee,[b] preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, (15) and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel. (16) Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee,[c] he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. (17) And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. (18) And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him. (19) And when he had gone a little farther thence, he saw James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. (20) And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him. (21) And they went into Capernaum;[d] and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. (22) And they were astonished at his doctrine:[e] for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes. (23) And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit;[f] and he cried out, (24) saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. (25) And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. (26) And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. (27) And they were all

a Matt. 4. 1.
A.D. 31.
d Matt. 4. 13.
A.D. 30. ending.
b Matt. 4. 12.
e Matt. 7. 28.
f Luke 4. 33.
c Matt. 4. 18.

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elsewhere, being more boldly vivid than that of the other Gospels. (See Notes on Matt. iii. 16, 17.)

(12) **Immediately the spirit driveth him.**—See Notes on Matt. iv. 1; but note also St. Mark's characteristic "immediately," and the stronger word "driveth him."

(13) **And he was there in the wilderness.**—See Notes on Matt. iv. 2—11. St. Mark compresses the history by omitting the several forms of the Temptation. Peculiar to him are (1) the use of "Satan" instead of "the devil;" (2) the statement that Jesus was "with the wild beasts." In our Lord's time these might include the panther, the bear, the wolf, the hyena, possibly the lion. The implied thought is partly that their presence added to the terrors of the Temptation, partly that in His being protected from them there was the fulfilment of the promise in the very Psalm which furnished the Tempter with his chief weapon, that the true child of God should trample under foot "the lion and the adder," the "young lion and the dragon" (Ps. xci. 13).

(14) **Now after that John was put in prison.**—St. Mark agrees with St. Matthew in omitting all our Lord's early ministry in Galilee and Jerusalem, and takes the imprisonment of the Baptist as his starting-point. That imprisonment is assumed here to be known; but the facts connected with it are not related till chap. vi. 17—20.

(15) **The time is fulfilled.**—The words are not found in the parallel passages of the other Gospels, and are interesting as embodying the same thought as St. Paul's "in the fulness of time" (Gal. iv. 4; Eph. i. 10). So, too, St. Mark adds "believe the gospel" to the simple "repent" of St. Matthew, and gives "the kingdom of God" instead of "the kingdom of heaven."

(16) **As he walked by the sea of Galilee.**—See Notes on Matt. iv. 18—22. St. Mark names Simon without the addition of Peter.

(20) **With the hired servants.**—Peculiar to this Gospel, and of some interest as throwing light on the relative social position of the sons of Zebedee.

(21) **And they went into Capernaum.**—Here St. Mark's narrative ceases to run parallel with that of St. Matthew, and agrees almost verbally with Luke iv. 31—37.

**Straightway.**—The frequent recurrence of this adverb, often disguised in the English version as "immediately," "anon," "by-and-by," should be noticed as we proceed. It occurs forty-one times in the Gospel; nine times in this first chapter.

(22) **And they were astonished.**—The verbal agreement with Matt. vii. 28 (where see Note) suggests the thought that St. Mark had heard or read that passage. For "doctrine" read *teaching.* Stress is laid, as in Matt. vii. 28, on the manner rather than the thing taught.

(23) **An unclean spirit.**—The phrase occurs in all the first three Gospels (not in St. John's), but with special frequency in this. As in most Eastern cities, in both ancient and modern times, madness had an immunity from restraint, and the demoniacs seem to have mingled, if they chose, with the crowd of worshippers in the synagogue.

(24) **What have we to do with thee?**—The cry is identical with that of the Gadarene demoniacs (Matt. viii. 29). Here, as there, the possessed man has a preternatural intuition of our Lord's greatness.

**The Holy One of God.**—The name occurs, as applied to Christ, only here, in the parallel passage of Luke iv. 34, and in the better MSS. of John vi. 69. It probably had its origin in the Messianic application of "Thy Holy One" in Ps. xvi. 10. Its strict meaning is "the Holy One whom God owns as such," who has attained, *i.e.*, the highest form of holiness.

(25) **Hold thy peace.**—Literally, *be still, be gagged.* The same verb is used in the calming of the winds and waves in chap. iv. 39.

(26) **He came out of him.**—St. Luke adds the fact "and hurt him not."

(27) **What new doctrine is this?**—A various-reading gives a different structure, "What thing is

amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine *is* this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him. (28) And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee. (29) And forthwith,[a] when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. (30) But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her. (31) And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them. (32) And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. (33) And all the city was gathered together at the door. (34) And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak,[1] because they knew him. (35) And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed. (36) And Simon and they that were with him followed after him. (37) And when they had found him, they said unto him, All *men* seek for thee. (38) And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth. (39) And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils. (40) And there came a leper to him,[b] beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. (41) And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth *his* hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. (42) And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed. (43) And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away; (44) and saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. (45) But he went out,[c] and began to publish *it* much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.

[a] Matt. 8. 14.

[b] Matt. 8. 2.

[1] Or, *to say that they knew him.*

[c] Luke 5. 15.

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this? A new doctrine with power. He commandeth even the unclean spirits . . ." "Doctrine" is, as elsewhere, the teaching taken as a whole, including manner as well as substance.

(29) **And forthwith.**—Again we have St. Mark's characteristic word, as in the "immediately" of verse 28, and in the "anon" of verse 30. (See Notes on Matt. viii. 14, 15.)

(32) **And at even.**—See Notes on Matt. viii. 16, 17. The special features in St. Mark are (1) the fuller description, in verse 33, that "all the city was gathered together at the door;" and (2) the omission of St. Matthew's reference to the prophecy of Isa. liii. 4.

(34) **And suffered not the devils to speak.**—St. Luke (iv. 41) gives the reason of the prohibition more distinctly. The demoniacs had cried out, "Thou art the Son of God." They knew that He was the Christ.

(35) **A great while before day.**—Literally, *very early, while it was yet night.* The note of time is peculiar to St. Mark. Prayer seems to have been sought now, as at other times, after a day of extraordinary and exhausting labour.

(36) **Simon and they that were with him.**—This part of the narrative is given by St. Luke also, but not by St. Matthew. The definite statement who they were that followed after Him is, however, peculiar to St. Mark; while St. Luke alone gives their motive: "they stayed Him that He should not depart from them." They would fain have kept Him at Capernaum, that He might teach them and heal their sick. This is to some extent, perhaps, implied in the words "All men seek for Thee."

(38) **Let us go into the next towns.**—The word translated "towns" occurs here only. It is a compound word, "village cities," and seems to have been coined to express the character of such places as Bethsaida, Chorazin, and others on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, which were more than "villages," yet could hardly be classed as "cities."

**That I may preach there also.**—St. Luke gives more fully "to publish the good news of the kingdom of God." The word "preach" has here its full significance of "proclaiming," doing a herald's office.

**For therefore came I forth.**—In this form the words might refer simply to His leaving Capernaum; but the report in St. Luke, "for therefore *was I sent,*" connects them with His mission as a whole. In any case, however, the disciples in this stage of their progress, would hardly enter, as we enter, into the full meaning of that mission. To them His "coming forth," even as being "sent," would be as from His home at Nazareth, not as from the bosom of the Father.

(39) **And he preached.**—See Note on Matt. iv. 23.

(40—43) **And there came a leper.**—See Notes on Matt. viii. 1—4. The miracle appears in St. Matthew as following closely on the Sermon on the Mount.

(43) **He straitly charged him.**—The word is the same as that in Matt. ix. 30 (where see Note).

(45) **But he went out.**—St. Mark alone describes the man himself as the agent in spreading the report of the miracle, and gives in more vivid terms than St. Luke the consequent pressure of the multitude, and the necessity for retirement into "desert places."

CHAPTER II.—(1) And again he entered into Capernaum after *some* days;[a] and it was noised that he was in the house. (2) And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive *them*, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them. (3) And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. (4) And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken *it* up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. (5) When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. (6) But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, (7) Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?[b] (8) And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? (9) Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? (10) But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) (11) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. (12) And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion. (13) And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.

(14) And as he passed by,[c] he saw Levi the *son* of Alphæus sitting at the receipt of custom,[1] and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him. (15) And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him. (16) And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners? (17) When Jesus heard *it*, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. (18) And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast:[d] and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not? (19) And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. (20) But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be

A.D. 31.

[a] Matt. 9. 1.

[c] Matt. 9. 9.

[1] Or, *at the place where the custom was received.*

[b] Job. 14. 4; Isa. 43. 25.

[d] Matt. 9. 14; Luke 5. 33.

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II.

(1) **And again he entered into Capernaum.**—See Notes on Matt. ix. 1—8. St. Mark alone names Capernaum, St. Matthew describing it as "His own city." The house may have been Peter's, as before in chap. i. 29.

(2) **No, not so much as about the door.**—Another of St. Mark's graphic touches of description.

**He preached the word.**—Literally, *He spake the word.*

(3) **Borne of four.**—The number of the bearers is given by St. Mark only.

(4) **They uncovered the roof . . . when they had broken it up.**—The strong expressions of the injury done to the roof are peculiar to St. Mark. St. Luke gives, "through the tiles."

**They let down the bed.**—St. Mark uses a different word from St. Matthew, the Greek form of the Latin word *grabatus*, the pallet or camp-bed used by the poor. The same word appears in John v. 8, 9, 10, and in Acts v. 15, ix. 33, but not at all in St. Matthew or St. Luke.

(6) **Certain of the scribes.**—These are described by St. Luke (v. 17) as "having come from every village of Galilee, and Judæa, and Jerusalem."

(7) **Why doth this man . . . ?**—The better MSS. give, "Why doth this Man thus speak? He blasphemeth."

(8) **When Jesus perceived in his spirit.**—The special mention of the spirit as the region of our Lord's consciousness is, as part of this narrative, peculiar to St. Mark, and is not without importance in its bearing on the reality and completeness of our Lord's human nature.

(12) **We never saw it on this fashion.**—St. Matthew gives the substance but not the words. St. Luke, "We have seen strange things to-day."

(14—17) **Levi the son of Alphæus.**—See Notes on Matt. ix. 9—13. St. Mark and St. Luke agree in giving the name Levi, the former alone describes him as the son of Alphæus.

(17) **I came not to call the righteous.**—Closely as the three accounts agree, it is noticeable that here also St. Mark and St. Luke, as writing for Gentile readers, omit the reference which we find in Matt. ix. 13, to the words cited by our Lord from the Old Testament.

(18—22) **And the disciples of John . . . . used to fast.**—Better, *were fasting.* See Notes on Matt. ix. 14—17. The only difference in detail between the two accounts is that in St. Matthew the disciples of John are more definitely specified as being the questioners.

taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days. (21) No man also seweth a piece of new[1] cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse. (22) And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles.

(23) And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day;[a] and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. (24) And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful? (25) And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him? (26) How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? (27) And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: (28) therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

CHAPTER III.—(1) And he entered again into the synagogue;[b] and there was a man there which had a withered hand. (2) And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him. (3) And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth. (4) And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. (5) And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness[2] of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched *it* out: and his hand was restored whole as the other. (6) And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him. (7) But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judæa, (8) and from Jerusalem, and from Idumæa, and *from* beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him. (9) And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should

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[b] Matt. 12. 9.

[1] Or, *raw*, or, *unwrought.*

[a] Matt. 12. 1.

[2] Or, *blindness.*

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(23–28) **And it came to pass.**—See Notes on Matt xii. 1—8.

**As they went . . .**—More literally, *they began to make a path* (or perhaps, *to make their way*), *plucking the ears of corn.*

(26) **In the days of Abiathar the high priest.**—St. Mark's is the only record that gives the name of the high priest, and in so doing it creates an historical difficulty. In 1 Sam. xxi. 1, Ahimelech is named as exercising the high priest's office in the Tabernacle at Nob. He is slain by Doeg, at the command of Saul, and his son Abiathar joins David at the cave of Adullam (1 Sam. xxii. 20), and continues to act as high priest till his deposition by Solomon (1 Kings ii. 26). Two conjectural explanations suggest themselves as probable: (1) that St. Mark, or that our Lord, may have given the name of the more famous priest of the two, who, though not then high-priest, was at the Tabernacle at the time referred to; (2) that he might have acted then as a coadjutor to his father, as Eli's sons seem to have done to him (1 Sam. iv. 4), and being, as his flight showed, of David's party, was the chief agent in allowing him to take the shew-bread.

### III.

(1–6) **A man there which had a withered hand.**—See Notes on Matt. xii. 9—14. St. Mark omits the reference to the sheep fallen into a pit, and, on the other hand, gives more graphically our Lord's "looking round" with an "anger" which yet had in it a touch as of pitying grief. The form of the Greek participle implies compassion as well as sorrow. St. Mark alone names (verse 6) the Herodians as joining with the Pharisees in their plot for His destruction. On the Herodians, see Notes on Matt. xi. 8, xxii. 16.

(7, 8) **And from Judæa . . . . and from Jerusalem.**—The fact thus recorded is interesting as in some degree implying the ministry in Jerusalem and its neighbourhood, which the first three Gospels, for some reason or other, pass over.

(8) **From Idumæa.**—The only passage in the New Testament in which this country is named. It had acquired a considerably wider range than the Edom of the Old Testament, and included the whole country between the Arabah and the Mediterranean. It was at this time under the government of Aretas (2 Cor. xi. 32), the father of the wife whom Herod Antipas had divorced, and this had probably brought about a more frequent intercourse between its inhabitants and those of Galilee and Peræa.

**They about Tyre and Sidon.**—The fact is interesting in its connection with the history of the Syro-Phœnician woman (Matt. xv. 21; Mark vii. 24) as showing how it was that our Lord's appearance in that region was welcomed as that of one whose fame had travelled thither before Him.

(9) **That a small ship should wait on him.**—The fact thus mentioned incidentally shows that in what is recorded in Matt. xiii. 2 our Lord was but having recourse to a practice already familiar.

wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him. (10) For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed[1] upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues. (11) And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. (12) And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known. (13) And he goeth up into a mountain,[a] and calleth *unto him* whom he would: and they came unto him. (14) And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, (15) and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils: (16) and Simon he surnamed Peter; (17) and James the *son* of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder: (18) and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the *son* of Alphæus, and Thaddæus, and Simon the Canaanite, (19) and Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into an house.[2] (20) And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. (21) And when his friends[3] heard *of it*, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.

(22) And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils.[b] (23) And he called them *unto him*, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan? (24) And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. (25) And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. (26) And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. (27) No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house. (28) Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men,[c] and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: (29) but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath

[2] Or, *home.*

[1] Or, *rushed.*

[3] Or, *kinsmen.*

[b] Matt. 9. 34.

[a] Matt. 10. 1.

[c] Matt. 12. 31.

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(10) **As many as had plagues.**—Literally, *scourges;* the same word as in Acts xxii. 24, Heb. xi. 36.

(11) **And unclean spirits.**—The testimony which had been given in a single instance (i. 24) now became more or less general. But it came in a form which our Lord could not receive. The wild cry of the frenzied demoniac had no place in the evidence to which He appealed (John v. 31—37), and tended, so far as it impressed men at all, to set them against the Teacher who was thus acknowledged.

(13) **And he goeth up into a mountain.**—The sequence of events in St. Mark varies much, it will be seen, from St. Matthew, and comes nearer to that in St. Luke. What follows is, like the parallel narrative of Luke vi. 12, 13, the selection rather than the mission of the Twelve, the latter appearing in Matt. x. In St. Luke we find the noticeable fact that the night had been spent in prayer, apparently, as usual, alone, and that when it was day He called the company of the disciples, who had waited below, and made choice of the Twelve.

(16–19) **And Simon he surnamed.**—On the list of the Apostles see Notes on Matt. x. 2—4.

(17) **Boanerges.**—The word is an Aramaic compound (*B'nè-regesh* = sons of thunder). We may see in the name thus given a witness to the fiery zeal of the sons of Zebedee, seen, *e.g.*, in their wish to call down fire from heaven on the Samaritans (Luke ix. 54), and John's desire to stop the work of one who cast out devils (Luke ix. 49), or the prayer of the two brothers that they might sit on their Lord's right hand and on His left in His kingdom (Matt. xx. 21). It was, we may well believe, that burning zeal that made James the proto-martyr of the Apostolic company (Acts xii. 2). We can scarcely fail to trace in the multiplied "thunderings and voices" of the Apocalypse (Rev. iv. 5; vi. 1; viii. 5), and in the tradition of John's indignant shrinking from contact with the heretic Cerinthus, that which was in harmony with the spiritual being of the Seer, and with the name which his Lord had thus given him.

(18) **Simon the Canaanite.**—Better, *Cananite;* or, following many MSS., *Cananæan, i.e.*, the Aramaic equivalent of Zelotes. (See Note on Matt. x. 2—4.)

(19) **And they went into an house.**—It would be better to put a full stop after "betrayed Him," and to make this the beginning of a new sentence.

(20) **So that they could not so much as eat bread.**—The graphic touch, as if springing from actual reminiscence of that crowded scene, is eminently characteristic of St. Mark.

(21) **And when his friends . . .**—Literally, *those from Him*—*i.e.*, from His home. As the "mother and the brethren" are mentioned later on in the chapter as coming to check His teaching, we must see in these some whom they had sent with the same object. To them the new course of action on which our Lord had entered seemed a sign of over-excitement, recklessly rushing into danger. We may, perhaps, see in the random word thus uttered that which gave occasion to the more malignant taunt of the scribes in the next verse. They were saying now, as they said afterwards (John x. 20), "He hath a devil, and is mad."

(22–30) **He hath Beelzebub.**—See Notes on Matt. xii. 24—32.

(23) **Said unto them in parables.**—The word is used in its wider sense, as including any form of argument from analogy more or less figurative. As in most reports of discourses as distinct from facts, St. Mark is somewhat briefer than St. Matthew.

(29) **In danger of eternal damnation.**—Better, *eternal judgment*, the Greek word not necessarily carrying with it the thoughts that now attach to the

never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: (30) because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

(31) There came then his brethren and his mother,[a] and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him. (32) And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee. (33) And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? (34) And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! (35) For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

a Matt. 12. 46.

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CHAPTER IV.—(1) And he began again to teach by the sea side:[b] and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land. (2) And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine, (3) Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow: (4) and it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. (5) And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: (6) but when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. (7) And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. (8) And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred. (9) And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. (10) And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable. (11) And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all *these* things are done in parables: (12) that seeing they may see,[c] and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and *their* sins should be forgiven them. (13) And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

b Matt. 13 1.

c Matt. 13. 14.

(14) The sower soweth the word. (15) And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when

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English. The best MSS., however, give, "in danger of an eternal sin"—*i.e.*, of one which will, with its consequences, extend throughout the ages. It is, of course, more probable that a transcriber should have altered "sin" into "judgment," substituting an easier for a more difficult rendering, than the converse.

(30) **Because they said.**—This, it will be noted, is peculiar to St. Mark. It is as though he would explain to his readers what it was that had called forth so awful a warning. He does not absolutely identify what had been said with the sin against the Holy Ghost, but it tended to that sin, and therefore made the warning necessary.

(31—35) **There came then his brethren and his mother.**—See Notes on Matt. xii. 46—50.

(32) **Thy mother and thy brethren.**—Many MSS. of high authority add, "and Thy sisters," and so explain the emphatic addition of that word in verse 35.

(34) **And he looked round about.**—Literally, *looking round on those who sat in a circle round Him.* Another graphic touch of this Evangelist.

IV.

(1—20) **He began.**—See Notes on Matt. xiii. 1—23.

(2) **In his doctrine.**—Better, *in His teaching.*

(3) **A sower.**—Better, *the* sower.

(8) **Some thirty . . .**—For the most part the parable is almost verbally identical with that in St. Matthew. Here, however, we note the difference, sufficient to establish a certain measure of independence, of an ascending instead of a descending scale.

(10) **They that were about him.**—In St. Matthew, simply, "the disciples." Here the presence of others besides the Twelve is directly asserted.

(11) **Unto them that are without.**—The form of the phrase is peculiar to St. Mark; St. Matthew giving, "to them," and St. Luke, "to the rest."

(12) **That seeing they may see . . . .**—St. Mark characteristically gives the words of Isa. vi. 9, but not as a quotation, and perhaps in a less accurate form, and omits the addition in Matthew, "Blessed are your ears . . ." The form in this instance, at first sight, suggests the thought that our Lord's purpose was to produce the blindness and deafness of which He speaks. The real meaning of the words is, however, plain. This was to be the result of the wilful blindness of those who rejected Him; and the acceptance of a foreseen result was, in Hebrew forms of thought, expressed as the working out of an intention. (See Notes on Matt. xiii. 14, 15.)

(13) **How then will ye know all parables?**—The question is peculiar to St. Mark, and suggests the thought of our Lord as contemplating for His disciples an ever-growing insight, not only into His own spoken parables, but into those of nature and of life. But if they were such slow scholars in this early stage, how was that insight to be imparted? The question is followed up by the answer. The first lesson in interpreting is given in that which is a pattern and exemplar of the method of interpretation.

(15) **In their hearts.**—The better MSS. give simply, "in them."

they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts. (16) And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; (17) and have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended. (18) And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, (19) and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches,[a] and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. (20) And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive *it*, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

(21) And he said unto them,[b] Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel,[1] or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick? (22) For there is nothing hid,[c] which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad. (23) If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. (24) And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete,[d] it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given. (25) For he that hath,[e] to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

(26) And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; (27) and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. (28) For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in

[1] The word in the original signifieth a less measure, as Matt. 5. 15.

[c] Matt. 10. 26.

[d] Matt. 7. 2.

[a] 1 Tim. 6. 17.

[e] Matt. 13. 12.

[b] Matt. 5. 15.

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(21) **Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel?**—See Note on Matt. v. 15. St. Mark, it will be noted, omits all the other parables that follow in St. Matthew, and connects with that of the Sower sayings more or less proverbial, which in St. Matthew appear in a different context. Looking at our Lord's method of teaching by the repetition of proverbs under different aspects and on different occasions, it is not unlikely that this of the "candle" was actually spoken in the connection in which we find it here. Their knowledge of the meaning of the parable was not given them for themselves alone, but was to shine forth to others. We probably owe to the saying so uttered the record of this parable given in three out of the four Gospels.

(22) **For there is nothing hid.**—This also is found elsewhere (*e.g.*, in Matt. x. 26). The Greek word here for "secret" is interesting as being the same as that which we find in our word "Apocrypha." The term was, in the first instance, applied to books that were surrounded with the secrecy of a spurious sacredness, but were not publicly recognised in the Church as being of divine authority, and was then transferred to all books which, whether "spurious" or "secret," wanted that recognition.

(24) **With what measure ye mete.**—See Note on Matt. vii. 2. The proverb furnishes a good illustration of what has just been said as to our Lord's method of presenting the same truth under different aspects. In the Sermon on the Mount it appears as the law of retribution, which brings pardon to those who pardon, judgment without mercy to those who show no mercy. Here the law works in another region. With the measure with which we mete our knowledge, God will, in His bounty, bestow more knowledge upon us. The old maxim, *Docendo disces* ("Thou wilt learn by teaching"), becomes here more than the lesson of experience, and is one with the divine law of equity.

(25) **For he that hath.**—See Note on Matt. xiii. 12.

(26) **As if a man should cast seed into the ground.**—What follows has the special interest of being the only parable peculiar to St. Mark, one therefore which had escaped the manifest eagerness of St. Matthew and St. Luke to gather up all that they could find of this form of our Lord's teaching. It runs to some extent parallel with the parable of the Sower, as though it had been given as another and easier lesson in the art of understanding parables; and if we assume a connection between St. Mark and St. Peter, it may be regarded as having in this way made a special impression on the mind of the Apostle. Like many other parables, it finds an interpretation in the analogous phenomena of the growth of the Kingdom (1) in the world at large, (2) in the heart of each individual. Speaking roughly, the Sower is, as before, either the Son of Man or the preacher of His word, and the ground falls under one or other of the heads just defined in the previous parable, with, perhaps, a special reference to the good ground.

(27) **And should sleep, and rise.**—So it was in the world's history. Men knew not the greatness of the new force that had been brought into action. Philosophers and statesmen ignored it. Even the very preachers of the new faith, the "sowers" of the parable, were hardly conscious of the enormous revolution which they were working. So it is in the individual life. The seemingly chance word, the new truth that flashes on the soul as a revelation, the old words now for the first time apprehended in their true force, these prove to be the seeds of a new growth in the soul.

(28) **The earth bringeth forth fruit of herself.**—Stress is laid on the spontaneity of growth; and the lesson drawn from it is obviously one at once of patience and of faith. It is not well in the spiritual husbandry, either of the nations of the world or of individual souls, to be taking up the seeds to see whether they are growing. It is wiser to sow the seed, and to believe that sun and rain will quicken it. Thus, the words find an interesting parallel, like, and yet different, in the precept of Eccles. xi. 6, "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand."

the ear. (29) But when the fruit is brought forth,[1] immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

(30) And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God?[a] or with what comparison shall we compare it? (31) *It is* like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: (32) but when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it. (33) And with many such parables spake he the word unto them,[b] as they were able to hear *it.* (34) But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples. (35) And the same day,[c] when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. (36) And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. (37) And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. (38) And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? (39) And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. (40) And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? (41) And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

CHAPTER V.—(1) And they came over unto the other side of the sea,[d] into the country of the Gadarenes. (2) And when he was come out of the

[1] Or, *ripe.*

[a] Matt. 13. 31.

[b] Matt. 13. 34.

A.D. 31.

[c] Matt. 8. 23.

[d] Matt. 8. 28.

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**First the blade, then the ear.**—Following the same lines as before, we have (1) three stages in the growth of the Church of Christ in the field of the world, and (2) three like stages representing the influence of the new truth on thoughts, purposes, acts, in the individual soul.

(29) **He putteth in the sickle.**—From one point of view, here again, the harvest is the end of the world (Matt. xiii. 39), and the putting in the sickle is the coming of Christ to judge. (Comp. the use of the same image in Rev. xiv. 14—18.) From the other, the harvest is the end of each man's life, and the sickle is in the hands of the Angel of Death.

(30) **With what comparison shall we compare it?**—Literally, *By what parable shall we set it forth?* The question which introduces the parable is in St. Mark and St. Luke, but not in St. Matthew. It gives us the impression of a question asked, in order to put the minds of the hearers on the stretch, so that they might welcome the answer.

(31—32) **It is like a grain of mustard seed.**—See Notes on Matt. xiii. 31, 32. Slight variations in this report are (1) the "great branches," and (2) the birds lodging "under the shadow" of the tree.

(33—34) **And with many such parables.**—See Notes on Matt. xiii. 34—35. St. Mark's omission of the reference to Ps. lxxviii. 2, and his addition of "as they were able to hear it," are, each of them, characteristic. It may be noted that the "many such parables" of St. Mark imply something like the series which we find in St. Matthew.

(34) **He expounded.**—The word may be noted as being the verb from which is formed the noun "interpretation" in 2 Pet. i. 20, and so takes its place in the coincidences of phraseology which connect that Epistle with this Gospel. (See *Introduction.*)

(35—41) **And the same day.**—Better, *in that day.* See Notes on Matt. viii. 23—27. The connection of the events, as given by St. Mark, seems to be precise enough, but it differs widely from that in St. Matthew and St. Luke, and it must remain uncertain which was the actual order.

**The other side.**—The voyage was from Capernaum —from the west to the east side of the lake.

(36) **They took him even as he was.**—The phrase is peculiar to this Gospel, and seems to point to the impression made on the mind of St. Mark's informant by the utter exhaustion that followed on the long day's labours. St. John's statement that our Lord, on His journey through Samaria, "being wearied . . , sat thus on the well" (John iv. 6), presents an interesting parallel.

(37) **Beat into the ship, so that it was now full.**—Better, *were beating upon the ship, so that it was filling.* Both verbs describe continuous action.

(38) **Asleep on a pillow.**—Better, on *the* pillow—the cushion commonly to be found in the boat's stern.

**Carest thou not that we perish?**—St. Mark alone gives this touch of despairing expostulation, in which we trace the specific want of faith which was afterwards reproved.

(39) **Peace, be still.**—Literally, *be still, be silenced.* The latter word is the same as that used of the man who had not on a wedding garment, and was "speechless" (Matt. xxii. 12). Note the vividness with which St. Mark gives the very words addressed to the raging sea, as though it were a hostile power rising in rebellion against its true Lord.

**The wind ceased.**—Better, *lulled.*

V.

(1—20) See Notes on Matt. viii. 28—34.

(1) **The country of the Gadarenes.**—The better MSS. give "Gerasenes," some "Gergesenes."

(2) **A man with an unclean spirit.**—The phrase, though not peculiar to St. Mark, is often used by him where the other Gospels have "possessed with demons, or devils." St. Mark and St. Luke, it will be noticed, speak of one only; St. Matthew of two.

ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, (3) who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: (4) because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any *man* tame him. (5) And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. (6) But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, (7) and cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. (8) For he said unto him, Come out of the man, *thou* unclean spirit. (9) And he asked him, What *is* thy name? And he answered, saying, My name *is* Legion: for we are many. (10) And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. (11) Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. (12) And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. (13) And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea. (14) And they that fed the swine fled, and told *it* in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. (15) And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. (16) And they that saw *it* told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and *also* concerning the swine. (17) And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts. (18) And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. (19) Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. (20) And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all *men* did marvel.

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(3) **No man could bind him.**—The better MSS. give, "no man could any longer bind him." The attempt had been so often made and baffled that it had been given up in despair.

(4) **Bound with fetters and chains.**—These were not necessarily of metal. The two processes of snapping the latter by one convulsive movement and wearing away (not "breaking") the latter by friction, rather suggests the idea of ropes, or cords, as in the case of Samson (Judg. xv. 13). In Ps. cxlix. 8 the "chains" seem distinguished from the "links of iron." The vivid fulness of the whole description is eminently characteristic of St. Mark's style.

(5) **Cutting himself with stones.**—This feature, again, is given only by St. Mark.

(6) **He ran and worshipped him.**—The precise attitude would be that of one who not only knelt but touched the ground with his forehead in token of his suppliant reverence.

(7) **Thou Son of the most high God.**—This is the first occurrence of the name in the New Testament, and is therefore a fit place for a few words as to its history. As a divine name "the Most High God" belonged to the earliest stage of the patriarchal worship of the one Supreme Deity. Melchizedek appears as the priest of "the Most High God" (Gen. xiv. 18). It is used by Balaam as the prophet of the wider Semitic monotheism (Num. xxiv. 16), by Moses in the great psalm of Deut. xxxii. 8. In the Prophets and the Psalms it mingles with the other names of God (Isa. xiv. 14; Lam. iii. 35; Dan. iv. 17, 24, 32, 34; vii. 18, 22, 25; Ps. vii. 17; ix. 2; xviii. 13; xlvi. 4, and elsewhere). In many of these passages it will be seen that it was used where there was some point of contact in fact or feeling with nations which, though acknowledging one Supreme God, were not of the stock of Abraham. The old Hebrew word (*Elion*) found a ready equivalent in the Greek ὕψιστος (*hypsistos*), which had already been used by Pindar as a divine name. That word accordingly appeared frequently in the Greek version of the Old Testament, and came into frequent use among Hellenistic or Greek-speaking Jews, occurring, *e.g.*, not less than forty times in the book Ecclesiasticus. It was one of the words which, in later as in earlier times, helped to place the Gentile and the Jew on a common ground. As such, it seems, among other uses, to have been frequently used as a formula of exorcism; and this, perhaps, accounts for its being met with here and in Luke viii. 28, Acts xvi. 17, as coming from the lips of demoniacs. It was the name of God which had most often been sounded in their ears.

**I adjure thee.**—The verb is that from which comes our word "exorcise." The phrase is peculiar to St. Mark, and confirms the notion that the demoniac repeated language which he had often heard. He, too, seeks in some sense to "exorcise," though it is in the language not of command, but entreaty.

(8) **For he said unto him.**—The Greek verb is in the imperfect tense, *he was saying*, as though the demoniac had interrupted our Lord even while the words were in the act of being uttered.

**Thou unclean spirit.**—It is noticeable that our Lord first speaks as if the men were oppressed by a single demon only, and that it is in the answer of the man himself that we learn that their name was Legion. (On the man's use of the word "Legion," see Note on Matt. viii. 29.)

(10) **He besought him much that he would not send them.**—The words are singularly significant of the state of the demoniac as half-conscious of his own personal being, and half-identifying himself with the disturbing demoniac forces which were tormenting him, and yet in so doing were leading him to look on the great Healer as his tormentor.

(13) **They were about two thousand.**—The number, which is peculiar to St. Mark, may be noted as another instance of his graphic accuracy in detail.

(15) **And had the legion.**—This special form of the antithesis between the man's past and present state is given by St. Mark only.

(21) And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him: and he was nigh unto the sea. (22) And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue,[a] Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, (23) and besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: *I pray thee,* come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live. (24) And *Jesus* went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him. (25) And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, (26) and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, (27) when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. (28) For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. (29) And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in *her* body that she was healed of that plague. (30) And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? (31) And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? (32) And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. (33) But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. (34) And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague. (35) While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's *house certain* which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? (36) As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe. (37) And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. (38) And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly. (39) And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and

[a] Matt. 9. 18.

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(19) **The Lord hath done for thee.**—Coming from our Lord's lips, and having "God" as its equivalent in Luke viii. 39, the word "Lord" must be taken in its Old Testament sense, as referring, not to the Lord Jesus, but to the Father.

(20) **Decapolis.**—On the import of the name and the extent of the district so called, see Note on Matt. iv. 25.

(22–43) **And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers.**—See Notes on Matt. ix. 18—25, where the narrative is found in a different connection as coming immediately after the feast in St. Matthew's house, which St. Mark has given in ii. 14—18.

**Jairus.**—The name is given by St. Mark and St. Luke only. It was a Græcised form of the Jair of Judg. x. 3, Num. xxxii. 41. It meets us in the Apocryphal portion of Esther (xi. 2) as the name of the father of Mardocheus, or Mordecai.

(23) **Lieth at the point of death.**—Literally, *is at the last point; in extremis.*

(26) **Was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse.**—The fact is the same as in St. Luke viii. 43, who, however, does not mention that she grew worse, but it is, as usual, expressed more graphically.

(29) **She felt in her body.**—Another graphic and therefore characteristic touch, giving not only the fact, but the woman's consciousness of it.

(30) **That virtue had gone out of him.**—Literally, *knowing fully in Himself the virtue that had gone out of Him.* The word "virtue" is used in the old medical sense, the power or force which brings about a certain definite result. So men spoke of the soporific "virtue" of this or that drug. And the term is used here, not less than in Luke v. 17, with a like technical precision, for the supernatural power that, as it were, flowed out at the touch of faith.

(32) **He looked round about.**—The tense of the Greek verb implies a continued looking.

(33) **The woman fearing and trembling.**—The whole description is fuller than that in St. Matthew.

(34) **Go in peace.**—The phrase has become so idiomatic that we dare not change it, but it may be well to remember that the true meaning of the Greek is "Go *into* peace."

(35) **Why troublest thou.**—The primary meaning of the verb is "to strip or flay." (See Note on Matt. ix. 36.)

**The Master.**—Strictly, as almost always, *the Teacher.*

(38) **Wailed greatly.**—The word used is the same as that in 1 Cor. xiii. 1, in connection with the "tinkling" (or better, *clanging*) sound of a cymbal, and, formed as it is from an interjection, *alala,* is applied to the inarticulate cries either of despair or victory.

weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. (40) And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. (41) And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. (42) And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was *of the age* of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment. (43) And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

CHAPTER VI.—(1) And he went out from thence,[a] and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him. (2) And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing *him* were astonished, saying, From whence hath this *man* these things? and what wisdom *is* this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? (3) Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him. (4) But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour,[b] but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. (5) And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed *them.* (6) And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages,[c] teaching.

(7) And he called *unto him* the twelve,[d] and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits; (8) and commanded them that they should take nothing for *their* journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money[1] in *their* purse: (9) but *be* shod with sandals; and not put on two coats. (10) And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an

A.D. 31.

[a] Matt. 13. 54.

[b] John 4. 44.

[c] Matt. 9. 35; Luke 13. 22.

[d] Matt. 10. 1.

[1] The word signifieth *a piece of brass money, in value somewhat less than a farthing,* Matt. 10. 9. but here it is taken in general for *money.*

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(40) **They laughed him to scorn.**—Here again the verb implies continuous action.

(41) **Talitha cumi.**—Here, as in the *Ephphatha* of chap. vii. 34, the Evangelist gives the very syllables which had fallen from the lips of the Healer, and been proved to be words of power. It would probably be too wide an inference to assume from this that our Lord commonly spoke to His disciples and others in Greek, but we know that that language was then current throughout Palestine, and the stress laid on the Aramaic words in these instances, as in the *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani* on the cross, shows that they attracted a special notice.

(42) **She was of the age of twelve years.**—St. Mark gives the age at the end of the narrative, St. Luke at the beginning, St. Matthew not at all; a proof of a certain measure of independence in dealing with the materials upon which the three narratives were severally founded.

(43) **That something should be given her to eat.**—This, again, is common to St. Mark and St. Luke, but is not given by St. Matthew. It suggests the thought that the fuller report must have come from one who had been present in the chamber where the miracle was wrought.

## VI.

(1–6) **And he went out from thence.**—See Notes on Matt. xiii. 54—58.

**His disciples follow him.**—St. Matthew does not name this fact. As put by St. Mark it seems to imply that the disciples did not accompany their Master, but came subsequently.

(2) **Many hearing him.**—The better MSS. give, "the many," *i.e.,* the majority of those who were present.

**Such mighty works.**—As the Evangelist notes in verse 5 that no mighty work had been done in Nazareth, these must refer to what had been reported there.

(3) **Is not this the carpenter?**—St. Mark's is the only Gospel which gives this name as applied to our Lord Himself. (See Note on Matt. xiii. 55.)

(5) **He laid his hands.**—St. Matthew says simply, "not many miracles." The fuller description is peculiar to St. Mark.

(6) **He marvelled.**—The word is to be noted as bearing on the reality of our Lord's human nature, and therefore on the necessary limits within which He, as being truly man, in spirit as well as body, vouchsafed to work. Whatever powers of prevision or insight into the hearts of men might belong to Him, they were not such as to exclude the wonder which men feel at that which comes to them unlooked for.

(7) **He called unto him the twelve.**—See Notes on Matt. x. 1—15. The omission by St. Mark of the greater part of the discourse connected with the mission of the Twelve in Matt. x. is every way characteristic of the writer, whose main work it was to trace the ministry of action rather than of speech.

(8) **Save a staff only.**—St. Matthew (x. 10) gives, "neither staves"—*i.e.,* they were to take one only.

**No money.**—As the margin gives, no *brass,* or rather *bronze,* or *money.* The coins referred to are probably the "farthing" and the "mite" of Mark xii. 42.

(9) **Be shod with sandals.**—The word occurs again in Acts xii. 8. It describes obviously the shoes worn by the poor as distinguished from those of the more wealthy class, the sole of leather or wood fastened over the instep by strong leather thongs.

house, there abide till ye depart from that place. (11) And whosoever shall not receive you,[a] nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them.[b] Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city. (12) And they went out, and preached that men should repent. (13) And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick,[c] and healed *them*. (14) And king Herod heard *of him*;[d] (for his name was spread abroad:) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him. (15) Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets. (16) But when Herod heard *thereof*,[e] he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead. (17) For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. (18) For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.[f] (19) Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him,[1] and would have killed him; but she could not: (20) for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and ob-

[a] Matt. 10. 14.
[e] Luke 3. 19.
[b] Acts 13. 51.
A.D. 30.
[c] Jas. 5. 14.
[f] Lev. 18. 16.
[d] Matt. 14. 1.
[1] Or, *an inward grudge*.

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(11) **Whosoever shall not receive you.**—The better MSS. give, "whatsoever place shall not receive you." (See Note on Matt. x. 14.)

(12) **And preached that men should repent.**—The work of the Apostles appears from this to have been a continuation of that of the Baptist. They announced the nearness of the kingdom of God, and repentance as the one adequate preparation for it, and baptised as the outward token of that repentance and the new life in which it was to issue (John iii. 5; iv. 2), but they did not as yet proclaim their Master as being Himself the Christ, and therefore the Head of that kingdom.

(13) **Anointed with oil.**—St. Mark is the only Evangelist who mentions this as the common practice of the disciples, but we learn from Jas. v. 14 that it was afterwards in use, at least, in the churches of Jerusalem and other Jewish communities. It was partly analogous to our Lord's treatment of the blind and deaf (vii. 33; viii. 23; John ix. 6), *i.e.*, it was an outward sign showing the wish to heal, and therefore a help to faith; but as the use of oil was more distinctly that of an agent recognised as remedial in the popular therapeutics of the time, it had also the character of uniting (and devout minds have since so regarded it) the use of natural outward means of healing with prayer for the divine blessing. It need scarcely be said that it had not the slightest affinity with the mediæval so-called sacrament of extreme unction, which, though it may still retain in theory, a partial secondary connection with the cure of the diseases of the body, is practically never administered till all hope of cure is abandoned. The development of the latter aspect of the usage was obviously the after-growth of a later time, when the miraculous gift of healing was withdrawn, and when it became necessary to devise a theory for the retention of the practice.

(14) **That John the Baptist was risen from the dead.**—See Notes on Matt. xiv. 1, 2. In addition an interesting illustration of what is stated as to Herod's belief may be given from the Roman poet Persius. He is describing in one of his satires (V. 180—188) the effect of superstitious fear in marring all the pleasures of the pride of luxurious pomp, and this is the illustration which he chooses :—

> "But when the feast of Herod's birthday comes,
> And, through the window, smoke-besmeared, the lamps,
> Set in due order, wreaths of violets round,
> Pour out their oily fumes, and in the dish
> Of red-clay porcelain tail of tunny swims,
> And the white flagon bellies out with wine,
> Thou mov'st thy lips, yet speak'st not, and in fear
> Thou keep'st the Sabbath of the circumcised,
> And then there rise dark spectres of the dead,
> And the cracked egg-shell bodes of coming ill . . .

. . . . . . . . .

It is clear that a description so minute in its details must have been photographed, as it were, from some actual incident, and could not have been merely a general picture of the prevalence of Jewish superstition in Roman society. Commentators on the Roman poet have, however, failed to find any clue to the incident thus graphically related. Can we, starting from what the Gospels tell us as to the character of Antipas, picture to ourselves a scene that explains his strange mysterious hints? In A.D. 39 Herod Agrippa I., the nephew of the Tetrarch, obtained the title of king from the Emperor Caligula. Prompted by the ambition of Herodias, Antipas went with her to Rome, to seek, by lavish gifts and show of state, the same distinction. The emissaries of Agrippa, however, thwarted his schemes, and he was deposed and sent into exile at Lugdunum. May we not conjecture that the same superstitious terror which made him say that John the Baptist was risen from the dead followed him there also? "Herod's birthday" again comes round, and there is a great feast, and instead of the "lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee," senators and courtiers and philosophers are there, and, lo! there is a pause, and the Tetrarch rises in silent horror—as Macbeth at the apparition of Banquo's ghost—and he sees the dark form shaking its gory locks, and his lips move in speechless terror, and he "does many things" on the coming Sabbath, and the thing becomes a by-word and a proverb in the upper circles of Roman society, and is noted in the schools of the Stoics as an illustration of what superstition can effect. The view thus stated is, of course, not more than a conjecture, but it at least explains phenomena. Persius died, at the age of twenty-eight or thirty, in A.D. 62, and may well therefore have heard the matter talked of in his boyhood.

(17) **For Herod himself had sent forth.**—See Notes on Matt. xiv. 3—12.

(19) **Herodias had a quarrel.**—Better, as in the margin, *had a grudge, or spite, against him.*

(20) **For Herod feared John.**—The full description of Herod's feelings towards the Baptist is peculiar to St. Mark.

served him;[1] and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly. (21) And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief *estates* of Galilee; (22) and when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give *it* thee. (23) And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give *it* thee, unto the half of my kingdom. (24) And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. (25) And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist. (26) And the king was exceeding sorry; *yet* for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her. (27) And immediately the king sent an executioner,[2] and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison, (28) and brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother. (29) And when his disciples heard *of it,* they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb. (30) And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus,[a] and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught. (31) And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. (32) And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.[b] (33) And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him. (34) And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people,[c] and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things. (35) And when the day was now far spent,[d] his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time *is* far passed: (36) send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat. (37) He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred

[1] Or, *kept him,* or, *saved him.*

A.D. 32.

[a] Luke 9. 10.

[b] Matt. 14. 13.

[c] Matt. 9. 36.

[d] Matt. 14. 15.

[2] Or, *one of his guard.*

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**A just man and an holy.**—The two words indicate—the first, righteousness as seen in relation to man; the second, the same element of character in relation to God.

**Observed him.**—The word has been differently interpreted, but Luke ii. 19, where it is translated "kept," seems decisive as to its meaning that Herod had a certain reverence for his prisoner. In English, however, to "keep" a man is ambiguous, and the "observed" of our version seems on the whole preferable to any other.

**He did many things.**—The better MSS. give, "he was much perplexed."

(21—29) **And when a convenient day was come.**—See Notes on Matt. xiv. 6—12.

**His lords, high captains, and chief estates.**—St. Mark alone gives the account of the guests. The three words mean respectively—(1) the *magnates,* or officials of the court; (2) the *chiliarchs,* or chief captains (literally, *captain of a thousand*—the same word as in Acts xxi. 31, xxvi. 26) in the Roman legion; (3) the *chief men* ("estates" to modern ears is too formal a word), probably the large landowners of the province.

(24) **She went forth, and said unto her mother.**—This feature in the narrative is peculiar to St. Mark.

(25) **By and by.**—We hardly recognise in this word, so much has its meaning altered, St. Mark's familiar "forthwith" or "immediately." At the period when our version was made it was, however (as we find in Shakespeare), in common use as an equivalent. (Comp. Matt. xiii. 21.)

(27) **An executioner.**—St. Mark uses a Latin word, *speculator,* a word which, originally meaning "watchman" or "sentinel," had come to be applied by Latin writers of the time specifically to soldiers employed, as in this instance, as couriers or messengers (Suet. *Caligula,* c. 44; Tacit. *Hist.* xi. 73).

(30) **And the apostles gathered themselves together.**—The return of the Twelve from their first mission is mentioned by St. Luke (ix. 10), but not by St. Matthew in this connection.

(31—44) **And he said unto them.**—See Notes on Matt. xiv. 13—21. Peculiar to St. Mark are (1) the tender consideration of the invitation to "rest awhile," and (2) the description of the throng of people as "coming and going."

(33) **And ran afoot.**—The words are used to point the contrast between the disciples, who had come in their boat, and the crowds who came by land.

(35) **Far spent . . . far passed.**—The Greek word is the same in both clauses.

(36) **Into the country.**—Better, *the farms*—*i.e.,* the enclosed, cultivated land, and what belonged to it.

**And buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.**—The better MSS. give simply, "buy themselves what they may eat."

pennyworth[1] of bread, and give them to eat? (38) He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes. (39) And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass. (40) And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties. (41) And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave *them* to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all. (42) And they did all eat, and were filled. (43) And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes. (44) And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men. (45) And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida,[2] while he sent away the people. (46) And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray. (47) And when even was come,[a] the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land. (48) And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them. (49) But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: (50) for they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. (51) And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. (52) For they considered not *the miracle* of the loaves: for their heart was hardened. (53) And when they had passed over,[b] they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore. (54) And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him, (55) and ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was. (56) And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him[3] were made whole.

CHAPTER VII.—(1) Then came together unto him the Pharisees,[c] and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem. (2) And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled,[4] that is to say, with unwashen,

[1] The Roman penny is seven-pence half-penny; as Matt. 18. 28.

[b] Matt. 14. 34.

[2] Or, *over against Bethsaida.*

[a] Matt. 14. 23.

[3] Or, *it.*

A.D. 32.

[c] Matt. 15. 1.

[4] Or, *common.*

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(39) **By companies.**—The Greek expresses the distributive force of the English by simple repetition, "companies *and* companies." The "green grass" may be noted as an example of St. Mark's vividness, and serves as an indirect note of time pointing to the same season as that specified by St. John, *sc.*, a little before the Passover. (Comp. John vi. 10.)

(40) **In ranks.**—The primary meaning of the Greek word is "a bed of flowers or herbs," and it comes in here effectively, with the same distributive reduplication as in the last verse, to paint the whole scene to the mind's eye.

(44) **Five thousand men.**—St. Mark uses the word which excludes women and children.

(45) **Unto Bethsaida.**—There is nothing in the text to warrant the marginal reading, "over against Bethsaida." It was probably suggested by some one who did not know that there were two Bethsaidas, in order to avoid the seeming difficulty which presented itself from the statement in St. Luke, that the Five Thousand were fed at or near Bethsaida.

(46—52) **And when he had sent them away.**—See Notes on Matt. xiv. 22—33.

(52) **For they considered not.**—This is peculiar to St. Mark, and may fairly be received as representing St. Peter's recollection of what had been the mental state of the disciples at the time. They had not drawn from the miracle of the Loaves the conclusion which they might have drawn, that all natural forces were subject to their Master's sovereignty. The personal connection of the Evangelist with the Apostle may, perhaps, also account for his omission of the narrative which St. Matthew gives of his rashness and failing faith.

(53—56) **And when they had passed over.**—See Notes on Matt. xiv. 34—36.

(56) **Or country.**—Better, as before in vi. 36, *farms* or *hamlets*. The three words form almost an exhaustive list of the various grades of aggregate human habitations.

**In the streets.**—Better, *in the market-places.*

**The border of his garment.**—Better, *the hem,* or *fringe*. See Note on Matt. ix. 20.

**Were made whole.**—The Greek tense implies an event frequently recurring.

### VII.

(1—23) **Then came together unto him.**—See Notes on Matt. xv. 1—20.

(2) **With defiled, that is is to say, with unwashen, hands.**—The first word means literally *common*. This came to be associated, as in Acts x. 14, with what was "unclean," and so, for Jews at all events, the word acquired a new meaning. St. Mark's Gentile readers, however, were not likely to understand what was meant by "common hands," and therefore he adds his explanation of "unwashed."

hands, they found fault. (3) For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash *their* hands oft,[1] eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. (4) And *when they come* from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, *as* the washing of cups, and pots,[2] brasen vessels, and of tables.[3] (5) Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? (6) He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with *their* lips,[a] but their heart is far from me. (7) Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men. (8) For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. (9) And he said unto them, Full well ye reject[4] the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. (10) For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: (11) but ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is* Corban,[b] that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free*. (12) And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; (13) making the word of God of none effect through your tra-

[1] Or, *diligently*; in the original, *with the fist*; Theophylact, *up to the elbow*.

[4] Or, *frustrate*.

[2] Sextarius is about a pint and an half.

[3] Or, *beds*.

[b] Matt. 15. 5.

[a] Isa. 29. 13; Matt. 15. 8.

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(3) **For the Pharisees, and all the Jews.**—For the sake of the same class of readers, St. Mark adds another explanatory note. The custom of which he speaks was not, he says, peculiar to the Pharisees as a sect; it had passed, through their influence, to the whole body of the people.

**Oft.**—The Greek MSS. present two readings, one of which this is the natural meaning; another, which means literally, "with the fist," and figuratively, "with might and main." The evidence is, on the whole, in favour of the former.

(4) **Except they wash.**—The Greek verb differs from that in the previous verse, and implies the washing or immersion (the verb is that from which our word "baptise" comes to us) of the whole body, as the former does of part. The idea on which the practice rested was not one of cleanliness or health, but of arrogant exclusiveness, fastening on the thought of ceremonial purity. They might have come, in the crowd of the market, into passing contact with a Gentile, and his touch was as defiling as if it had been that of a corpse. So, too, the washing of cups and the like was because they might have been touched by heathen, and therefore impure, lips.

**Washing.**—Literally, *baptism*; but the form of the word is masculine, while that used for the sacramental rite is neuter. The masculine occurs again, probably in the same sense, as meaning ablutions generally, in Heb. vi. 2.

**Pots.**—The Greek word (*xestes*) may be noted as a corrupt form of *sextarius*, and therefore taking its place among the Latin words used by St. Mark. (See *Introduction.*)

**Tables.**—Better, *couches—i.e.*, the low wide benches which were placed near the tables, and on which the guests reclined instead of sitting. These also had to be scrupulously washed, because it was possible that a heathen might have lain on them. The word is, perhaps, used in the same sense in chap. iv. 21.

(5) **With unwashen hands.**—The better MSS. give, "with *defiled* hands," the word being the same as before. It was probable that the Pharisees would use the stronger word in their question, equally probable that a transcriber might think it better to substitute that which was the more easily understood.

(6) **Well hath Esaias prophesied.**—Strictly, *well did Esaias prophesy.*

(7) **In vain do they worship me.**—The word used here and in Matt. xv. 9, is not that commonly used to express the outward act of homage, but one which expresses (as in Acts xviii. 13) inward devotion.

**The commandments.**—The two Greek words used for "commandment" in this and the following verses are, as has been said in the Note on Matt. xv. 9, not quite the same in meaning; that in this verse pointing to many detailed precepts; that in the next to the commandment which is "exceeding broad."

(8) **As the washing of pots and cups.**—Many of the better MSS. omit the whole of the latter part of this verse. On internal grounds, however, it is hardly likely that such words should have been added as a note, and it *is* likely enough that the passage should have been altered by a transcriber, to make it agree with the report in St. Matthew.

(9) **Full well ye reject.**—The adverb is peculiar to St. Mark, and has in it the ring of a scathing and indignant irony. The word "reject" is hardly formal enough, the Greek conveying the idea, as in Gal. iii. 15, Heb. vii. 18, of "rescinding" or "repealing." This the Pharisees practically did when they added traditions which pretended to be interpretations, but were in reality at variance with it.

(11) **It is Corban.**—The Hebrew word is peculiar to St. Mark. It occurs frequently in Leviticus and Numbers (*e.g.*, Lev. ii. 1, 5; Num. vii. 3, 5), and is translated generally by "offering," sometimes by "oblation" (Lev. ii. 13; iii. 1), but elsewhere in the Old Testament it only appears in Ezek. xx. 28, xl. 43. It had come to be applied specifically (as in the Greek of Matt. xxvii. 6; Jos. *Wars*, ii. 9, § 4) to the sacred treasure of the Temple.

**He shall be free.**—The words, as the italics show, have nothing corresponding to them in the Greek, nor are they needed, if only, with some MSS., we strike out the conjunction "and" from the next verse. So the sentence runs, "*If a man shall say . . . ye suffer him no more . . .*"

(13) **Making the word of God of none effect.**—Again the Greek word is somewhat more technical, *making null and void, cancelling*, as in Gal. iii. 17.

dition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

(14) And when he had called all the people *unto him*,[a] he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one *of you*, and understand: (15) There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. (16) If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. (17) And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable. (18) And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, *it* cannot defile him; (19) because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? (20) And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. (21) For from within,[b] out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, (22) thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: (23) all these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

(24) And from thence he arose,[c] and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know *it*: but he could not be hid. (25) For a *certain* woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet: (26) the woman was a Greek,[1] a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

[b] Gen. 6. 5 & 8. 21; Matt. 15. 19.

[a] Matt. 15. 10.

[c] Matt. 15. 21.

[1] Or, *Gentile*.

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**Through your tradition.**—Here the structure of the sentence points to the "tradition" as being the instrument with which the Law was made null and void. In Matt. xv. 6 the meaning is slightly different (see Note there).

**Many such like things.**—Assuming the words "washing of cups and pots," in verse 8, to be genuine, there is an emphatic scorn expressed in this iteration of the same formula.

(16) **If any man have ears to hear.**—It was with this formula that our Lord had closed some at least of His parables (chap. iv. 9, Matt. xiii. 10). And it was probably this that led to the form which the inquiry of the disciples took when they came to ask their Master "concerning the parable." The whole verse is, however, omitted in many of the best MSS., and may have been originally a marginal note written by some early transcriber to call attention to the truth stated in the text.

(19) **It entereth not into his heart.**—The words are not in St. Matthew, and emphasise the contrast with what follows. The "heart" is, after the common Hebrew idiom, the symbol of the mind as well as the affections. (Comp. Prov. vii. 7; ix. 4, 16; x. 13, in all of which "understanding" stands for the Hebrew of "heart.")

**Purging all meats.**—This also is peculiar to St. Mark, and presents some difficulties. In the commonly received text, the participle is in the neuter nominative, agreeing with the nominative to the verb "goeth out." But in this construction it is difficult to see in what sense that which goeth into the mouth—itself an article of food, with no special character—can be said to purge or cleanse all other forms of food. The better MSS., however, give the participle in the masculine. This has been explained by many as a grammatical anomaly, and the participle being treated as if it agreed (though in a different case) with the word "draught" or "cesspool," the latter is said to cleanse all meats, as removing the *excreta*, or impure parts, from them, and leaving only that which nourishes the body. A far better construction, both as to grammar and meaning, is found by making the word "purging," or better, *cleansing*, agree with the subject of the verb "He saith," in verse 18—"He saith this . . . and in so saying, cleanseth all meats." So taken, the words anticipate, in almost the same terms, the truth of Acts x. 15, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." The construction is tenable grammatically, has the support of high authority both ancient and modern, and obviously gives a much better sense. It is a possible conjecture that the words "cleansing all meats" may have been, at first, a marginal note (like the addition in verse 16), attached to "He saith," and have afterwards found their way into the text.

(22) **Covetousness, wickedness.**—The Greek words for these are, like the preceding, in the plural, as pointing to the manifold forms in which the sins show themselves.

**An evil eye.**—As explained by Matt. xx. 15 (where see Note), the "evil eye" is that which looks askance on the good of others—*i.e.*, envy in its most malignant form.

**Pride.**—Better, perhaps, *haughtiness*. This is the only passage in the New Testament where the word so translated occurs. The cognate adjective meets us in Rom. i. 30; 2 Tim. iii. 2.

**Foolishness.**—This, again, is a rare word in the New Testament, meeting us only in 2 Cor. xi. 1, 17, 21. As interpreted by Prov. xiv. 18, xv. 21, it is the folly which consists in the absence of the fear of God, the infatuation of impiety.

(24—30) **And from thence he arose.**—See Notes on Matt. xv. 21—28.

**Tyre and Sidon.**—The better MSS. omit the latter name here, and reserve it for verse 31, where see Note.

**Entered into an house.**—The fact is peculiar to St. Mark, and seems specified as an indication of our Lord's wish to avoid publicity.

(26) **A Greek**—*i.e.*, in the sense which the word had gained in Palestine, a Gentile, as in Rom. i. 16; ii. 9, 10. The modern use of "Frank" in the East for Europeans of every country, offers an analogous extension of the original meaning of a name.

**Syrophenician.**—The word, which occurs in Juvenal (*Sat.* viii. 159), may be noted as an instance of

(27) But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* unto the dogs. (28) And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs. (29) And he said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter. (30) And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

(31) And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis. (32) And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him. (33) And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue; (34) and looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. (35) And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. (36) And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published *it*; (37) and were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

A.D. 32.

CHAPTER VIII.—(1) In those days the multitude being very great,[a] and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples *unto him*, and saith unto them, (2) I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat: (3) and if I send them away fasting to their own

[a] Matt. 15. 32.

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St. Mark's tendency to use Latin forms. The Emperor Adrian divided the province of Syria into three parts—Syria proper, Syro-Phœnicia, and Syria-Palæstina—and we may well believe that this official distinction rested on a pre-existing nomenclature.

(27) **Let the children first be filled.**—The precise form of the answer thus given is peculiar to St. Mark.

(28) **Eat of the children's crumbs.**—The form varies slightly from St. Matthew's "the crumbs that fall from their masters' table," and has, perhaps, a certain vividness of antithesis.

(29) **For this saying go thy way.**—St. Mark omits the words "O woman, great is thy faith," and puts the answer to the prayer in a somewhat more definite form than St. Matthew's "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

(30) **Her daughter laid upon the bed.**—The graphic description, as usual, is characteristic of St. Mark.

(31) **Departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.**—The better MSS. give "from the coasts of Tyre through Sidon." The latter city lay about twenty miles to the north. Accepting this reading, it marks the extreme limit of our Lord's journeyings—we can hardly say of His ministry, for there is no indication that He went there as a preacher of the Kingdom. We may however, perhaps, trace the feeling which prompted the visit in the words, "It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon," in Luke x. 14, and in the "Other sheep, not of this fold," in John x. 16.

**Decapolis.**—Another instance of St. Mark's use of a Roman nomenclature. St. Matthew says simply, "He departed thence, and came by the Sea of Galilee." For Decapolis, see Note on Matt. iv. 25.

(32) **They bring unto him one that was deaf.**—The narrative that follows is peculiar to St. Mark. The locality is not named, but was probably somewhere near the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

**Had an impediment in his speech.**—The English rendering is quite accurate, but it may be noted that the word which St. Mark uses stands for "dumb" in the Greek version of Isa. xxxv. 6, and may therefore have been used by him to connect the miracle which he describes with that prophecy.

(33) **He took him aside from the multitude.**—We trace in this, and in the manual acts that followed, the same tender considerateness for the infirmities of the sufferer as in our Lord's treatment of the blind. (See Note on Matt. ix. 29.) Here the man could not find in the pitying tones of the voice of the Healer that on which his faith could fasten, and the act came in to fill up the void.

(34) **Looking up to heaven, he sighed.**—The look, it is clear, implied prayer, as in John xi. 41. The "sigh," too, has its counterpart in the "groans" and "tears" of John xi. 33, 35, 38, and finds its analogue in the sadness of sympathy which we feel at the sight of suffering, even when we know that we have the power to remove its cause.

**Ephphatha.**—Another instance of St. Mark's reproduction of the very syllables uttered by our Lord. (See *Introduction*, and Note on chap. v. 41.)

(35) **His ears.**—Literally, *his hearing*, or, as the word is in the plural, *his organs of hearing.*

**The string of his tongue.**—Better, *bond*, that which confined and hampered his speech. (Comp. Luke xiii. 16.) There is no ground for thinking that St. Mark used the word in any anatomical sense, as the English word seems to suggest, for a "nerve" or "tendon," as in the "eye-strings" of the original text of the "Rock of Ages."

(37) **And the dumb to speak.**—We note the distinction between St. Mark's accurate description in verse 32, and the less precise language of popular amazement.

### VIII.

(1) **In those days.**—See Notes on Matt. xv. 32—38.

(3) **For divers of them.**—Better, *and some of them are* (or, *are come*) *from afar.* The words are given as spoken by our Lord, and are in the perfect tense.

houses, they will faint by the way: for divers of them came from far. (4) And his disciples answered him, From whence can a man satisfy these *men* with bread here in the wilderness? (5) And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven. (6) And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before *them;* and they did set *them* before the people. (7) And they had a few small fishes: and he blessed, and commanded to set them also before *them.* (8) So they did eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken *meat* that was left seven baskets. (9) And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

(10) And straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha. (11) And the Pharisees came forth,[a] and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him. (12) And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation. (13) And he left them, and entering into the ship again departed to the other side.

(14) Now *the disciples* had forgotten to take bread,[b] neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf. (15) And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and *of* the leaven of Herod. (16) And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have no bread.[c] (17) And when Jesus knew *it,* he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? (18) Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember? (19) When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. (20) And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven. (21) And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?

(22) And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him. (23) And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he

[a] Matt. 16. 1.

[b] Matt. 16. 5.

[c] Matt. 16. 7.

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(4) **Satisfy.**—The verb is the same as the "filled" of Mark vii. 27.

**Here in the wilderness.**—The word here, as in Matt. xv. 33, is not the one usually employed, and is abstract, not concrete, in its form, suggesting the idea, *i.e.,* of "loneliness;" and through that, of a lonely place. It is used in a like sense in 2 Cor. xi. 26; Heb. xi. 38. Like many other abstract words, it seems to have tended to a concrete meaning; but there is always an appreciable shade of difference.

(6) **To sit down.**—The Greek word implies the usual Eastern position of reclining, rather than our sitting.

(8) **Broken meat.**—Better, *fragments.*

**Seven baskets.**—See Note on Matt. xv. 37.

(10) **He entered into a ship.**—Better, *the ship,* or *boat.*

**Dalmanutha.**—St. Mark's use of the word, instead of the Magdala or "Magada" of St. Matthew, may be noted as an instance of his independence. It is mentioned by no other writer. On its probable site, see Note on Matt. xv. 39.

(11—12) **And the Pharisees came forth.**—See Notes on Matt. xvi. 1—4. St. Mark, it may be noted, does not mention the presence of the Pharisees, and gives only part of our Lord's answer. On the other hand, he characteristically describes the "sighing deeply in spirit" in verse 12, which St. Matthew does not give.

(12) **There shall no sign be given.**—We note the omission of "the sign of the prophet Jonas," as given in Matt. xvi. 4.

(13—21) See Notes on Matt. xvi. 4—12.

(14) **Now the disciples.**—Better, *and the disciples,* in close connection with the preceding verse, and not as the beginning of a new section.

**More than one loaf.**—Another detail peculiar to St. Mark.

(15) **He charged them.**—The verb is in the imperfect tense, and implies that the command was more than once repeated. Hence they, too, "were reasoning," more than once, what was the meaning of the precept on which so much stress was laid.

**The leaven of Herod.**—The words imply the presence among the questioners of verse 11 of others besides the Pharisees. On the connection between the "leaven of Herod" and that of "the Sadducees" in Matt. xvi. 6, see Note on that verse.

(17) **Have ye your heart yet hardened?**—The question is peculiar to St. Mark, as are also the two first questions in verse 18. The expression of indignant astonishment is characteristically more vivid and emphatic in St. Mark's report.

(19–20) **How many baskets . . ?**—The words for "baskets" are, as has been said, different in the two verses. (See Note on Matt. xv. 37.)

(22) **And he cometh to Bethsaida.**—This miracle also is recorded by St. Mark only. Judging by the localities named previously, Dalmanutha (verse 10), the passage across the lake (verse 13), and afterwards "the villages of Cæsarea Philippi (verse 27), it is probable that this was the Bethsaida on the north-eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

(23) **He took the blind man by the hand.**—We note in the act the same considerate adaptation of

had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. (24) And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. (25) After that he put *his* hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly. (26) And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell *it* to any in the town.

(27) And Jesus went out,[a] and his disciples, into the towns of Cæsarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am? (28) And they answered, John the Baptist: but some *say* Elias; and others, One of the prophets. (29) And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ. (30) And he charged them that they should tell no man of him. (31) And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and *of* the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. (32) And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. (33) But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

(34) And when he had called the people *unto him* with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me,[b] let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. (35) For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. (36) For what shall it profit a

[a] Matt. 16. 13.

[b] Matt. 10. 38.

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the method of healing to the man's infirmities as in the case of the deaf man in chap. vii. 33. As far as the first three Gospels are concerned, these are the two instances of the "spitting" here recorded, but it is one of the links that connect St. Mark with the fourth Gospel (John ix. 6).

**If he saw ought.**—The better MSS. give the very words, "Dost thou see ought?"

(24) **I see men as trees, walking.**—The better MSS. give two words expressing different forms of perception, "I behold men, for I see them walking as trees." His sight was not yet clear, but he interpreted what it told him rightly. The naturalness of this description of the first impression of the restored sense strikes every reader. From the point of view which looks on our Lord's miracles as having a symbolic character, and being, as it were, acted parables, we may see in it that which represents an analogous stage in the spiritual growth of men, when truths for which before they had no faculty of vision are seen for the first time, but are not as yet apprehended in their full or definite proportions. They need a second touch of the Divine Hand, the passing away of another film of ignorance or prejudice, and then they too see all things clearly.

(25) **Every man.**—The better MSS. give "all things."

**Clearly.**—This is probably the right rendering of the true reading; but the received text gives a word which implies that he was far, as well as clear, sighted.

(26) **Neither go into the town.**—As in other works of healing, so in this, our Lord seems to have prescribed quietude after, as well as before, the miracle, as a spiritual discipline—partly, we may believe, because the work that had been done called for prayer for the right use of the new, or the restored, power; partly (as in Matt. xii. 16), because He would not seem Himself to court the fame of publicity. Following the line of thought taken in the Note on verse 24, we may extend the application to the work of spiritual illumination. Here also it is not good that the first clear apprehension of spiritual truths should be followed by the hasty utterances of the excitement of the new-born life.

(27—29) See Notes on Matt. xvi. 13—16.

**The towns of Cæsarea Philippi.**—Better, *villages.*

**He asked his disciples.**—The tense of the Greek verb implies that it was not a single question only, but a continued and, as it were, searching inquiry. The time was come to test the faith of the disciples thoroughly.

(30) **And he charged them.**—On the assumption of a connection between the writer of this Gospel and St. Peter (see *Introduction*), the omission of the promise to the latter, recorded so fully by St. Matthew, may fairly be regarded as an evidence of the humility of the Apostle, who shrank from what might seem to savour of self-assertion.

(31—33) **And he began to teach them.**—See Notes on Matt. xvi. 21—23. The points peculiar to St. Mark are, (1) that our Lord "spake that saying openly"—the absence of any reticence in this announcement of apparent failure was what startled the disciples; and (2) the graphic touch that as He rebuked Peter, He turned and looked, not on that Apostle only, but on the whole company of the disciples.

(34—38) **And when he had called the people.**—See Notes on Matt. xvi. 24—28. The "calling the people," or better, *the multitude*, to hear what involved the apparent failure of His mission announced in the preceding verses is an addition to St. Matthew's narrative. It is confirmed by St. Luke's "He said unto all" (ix. 23).

(35) **And the gospel's.**—In St. Matthew we find simply "for Me." The addition is significant, as showing that though our Lord demanded in the first instance entire personal devotion, it was for Himself as identified with the cause of the good news from God of which He had borne witness, and of which He was to be the martyr (John xviii. 37).

(36, 37) **His own soul.**—Better, *life* in both verses. The word "lose" is not the same as in verse 35, and man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? (37) Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (38) Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation;[a] of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

CHAPTER IX.—(1) And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you,[b] That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

(2) And after six days Jesus taketh *with him* Peter, and James, and John,[c] and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. (3) And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. (4) And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. (5) And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses and one for Elias. (6) For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid. (7) And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. (8) And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves. (9) And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead. (10) And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.

(11) And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elias must first come? (12) And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man,[d] that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought. (13) But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.

[a] Matt. 10. 33.

A.D. 32.

[b] Matt. 16. 28.

[c] Matt. 17. 1.

[d] Isa. 53. 2, &c.

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had, perhaps, better be rendered *forfeit*, as implying, what the other word does not necessarily imply, the idea of a penalty.

(38) **Whosoever therefore.**—Here St. Mark differs from St. Matthew, who omits these words, and agrees, though not quite verbally, with St. Luke. It is obvious that general as the words are, they had a special bearing on those who, like Peter, and probably the other disciples, had shown that they were "ashamed" of the words which had just been spoken.

**This adulterous and sinful generation.**—The words are not found in St. Luke's report, but they agree with language which our Lord had used before (Matt. xii. 39; xvi. 4). Their force here lies in the contrast drawn between those from whose frown or scorn the disciples were now shrinking, and the bright hosts in whose presence the faithless should be put to shame when the Son of Man should come in His glory. They were to look on this picture and on that, and ask themselves which ordeal was the most terrible.

## IX.

(1) **And he said unto them.**—The division of the chapters is obviously wrong. The verse ought to come, as in St. Matthew and St. Luke, in immediate connection with the foregoing discourse. The present arrangement may have been made with a view of connecting it with the Transfiguration, as that which was the fulfilment of the promise; but if so, it was based on what is at least a doubtful interpretation. (See Note on Matt. xvi. 28.) The form of the words in St. Mark agrees with St. Luke's report, "until they shall see the kingdom of God," rather than with St. Matthew's "the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

**Come with power.**—The Greek verb implies that they should see it not "coming," but as having actually come in its completeness.

(2—8) **And after six days.**—See Notes on Matt. xvii. 1—8.

(3) **Shining.**—Better, perhaps, *glittering*.

**Exceeding white as snow.**—The two last words are wanting in the best MSS. The comparison of the bright raiment with clothes that had just passed through the fuller's or bleacher's hands, is, in its homely vividness, peculiar to St. Mark.

(5) **Master.**—St. Mark, after his manner, gives the Hebrew "Rabbi" for the "Lord" of St. Matthew, and the "Master" of St. Luke.

(7) **This is my beloved Son.**—It will be noted that St. Mark omits the words "in whom I am well pleased."

(9—13) **And as they came down from the mountain.**—See Notes on Matt. xvii. 9—13.

(10) **And they kept that saying with themselves.**—We again note what we may describe as a characteristic touch, analysing the mental condition of the disciples in relation to their Master's teaching.

(13) **As it is written of him.**—The words are peculiar to St. Mark, and probably point (1) to the special prediction of the coming of Elijah in Mal. iv., and (2) to the parallelism between the career of the Baptist and that of the Tishbite prophet. What had been written of or for the one, the record of bold rebuke and consequent suffering for the Truth, had received its fulfilment in the other.

(14) And when he came to *his* disciples,[a] he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. (15) And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to *him* saluted him. (16) And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them?[1] (17) and one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; (18) and wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him:[2] and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not. (19) He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me. (20) And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. (21) And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. (22) And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. (23) Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth. (24) And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. (25) When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou* dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. (26) And *the spirit* cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. (27) But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. (28) And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? (29) And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

[a] Matt. 17. 14.

[1] Or, *among yourselves?*

[2] Or, *dasheth him.*

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(14—29) **And when he came to his disciples.**—See Notes on Matt. xvii. 14—21. The narrative of St. Mark here becomes much the fullest of the three. He alone mentions, *e.g.*, in this verse, the presence of the scribes disputing with the disciples, and in the next, the "running" and the "greeting" with which the multitude received our Lord as He came down from the mountain, and the question in verse 16 as to the cause of the dispute.

(15) **Were greatly amazed.**—This fact is noted by St. Mark only. We are not told what caused it. Was there some lingering radiance, or some expression of divine joy hardly less radiant, that struck the disciples and the people as strangely unlike the sadness that had been shown in recent words and looks? (chap. viii. 30—33).

(17) **A dumb spirit.**—This, again, is peculiar to St. Mark, as is also the "gnashing of the teeth" and the "pining" or "withering" in the next verse.

(20) **He fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming.**—Another graphic touch found only in St. Mark.

(21) **And he asked his father.**—The question, asked as if to bring into strong relief the chronic, and therefore seemingly hopeless, character of the possession, is peculiar to this Gospel, as is the circumstantial account of the falling oft-times "into the fire and into the waters."

(22) **If thou canst do any thing.**—The words are spoken almost in the accents of despair. Could He, the Master, prevail where the disciples had failed?

(23) **If thou canst believe.**—The better MSS. omit the word "believe," and the sentence without it is taken as expressing the sadness of surprise. Our Lord repeats the half-believing, half-despairing words of the father in a tone of sadness, *If thou canst . . .!* Was this the way in which a man should speak who came to Him as a Healer? Such a one had to learn the great primary lesson that "all things were possible to him that believeth," that the secret of previous failure lay, in part at least, in his own want of faith, as well as in that of the scribes and disciples who had tried their arts of exorcism in vain.

(24) **And straightway the father of the child . . .**—The whole verse is peculiar to St. Mark. The better MSS. omit "with tears." The answer of the father shows that the conflict between faith and unfaith was still continuing; but the relative position of the two had altered for the better, and the former was beginning to prevail.

(25) **When Jesus saw that the people came running together.**—This fact and the words of the rebuke to the "deaf and dumb spirit" are found only in St. Mark.

**Enter no more into him.**—We may note in these words, used by our Lord in this case only, a tender adaptation to the weak faith of the father. He had seen so many relapses, the last state worse than the first, that it was hard for him to take in the thought that the cure would be complete and permanent.

(26) **Rent him sore.**—The verb is the same as the "tare him" of verse 20, and implies a spasm, as of horror, convulsing the whole frame. The corpse-like falling as one dead, and the cry of many (better, "*the* many"—*i.e.*, "the greater part, most of them") that he was dead, and our Lord's taking the boy by the hand, and the question of the disciples, are all peculiar to St. Mark.

(29) **But by prayer and fasting.**—The better MSS. omit the last two words. It is possible that they may have been added, like the "tears" of verse 24, to strengthen the words actually spoken, by bringing in

(30) And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know *it.* (31) For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men,[a] and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day. (32) But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him.

(33) And he came to Capernaum:[b] and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? (34) But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who *should be* the greatest. (35) And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, *the same* shall be last of all, and servant of all. (36) And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, (37) Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

(38) And John answered him,[c] saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us. (39) But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name,[d] that can lightly speak evil of me. (40) For he that is

[a] Matt. 17. 22.

[b] Matt. 18. 1.

[c] Luke 9. 49.

[d] 1 Cor. 12. 3.

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what had been found to bring with it a new intensity of spiritual volition, and therefore of power to rescue human souls from the frenzy and despair into which they had been plunged by the unclean spirits that possessed them. A like addition of "fasting" to prayer, apparently from a like ascetic tendency, is found in 1 Cor. vii. 5, where see Note. In St. Matthew both words are found, but some of the most ancient MSS. omit the whole verse. On the whole, however, there is a balance of evidence in their favour; and, as shown in the Note on Matt. xvii. 21, what they teach is in harmony with other portions of the teaching both of our Lord and His Apostles.

(30—32) **And they departed thence.**—See Notes on Matt. xvii. 22, 23.

**He would not that any man should know it.**—We note St. Mark's addition, as showing that the apparent shrinking from publicity which had marked our Lord's action since the feeding of the Four Thousand still continued.

(32) **They understood not that saying.**—The words, giving once more a kind of psychological analysis of the disciples' thoughts, are not in St. Matthew, but are found in St. Luke. They imply the continuance of the perplexity described in verse 10.

(33—37) **And he came to Capernaum.**—See Notes on Matt. xviii. 1—5. The arrival at Capernaum is given by St. Matthew in connection with the narrative of the *didrachma* or tribute money, which in his Gospel immediately precedes that now before us. St. Mark alone records the previous dispute of the disciples, and the question which brought that dispute as into the light of day.

(34) **Who should be the greatest.**—Better, more simply, *who was the greatest.*

(36) **When he had taken him in his arms.**—The act is expressed in the Greek by a single participle which occurs only here and in chap. x. 16. It may mean either that the child was taken up in our Lord's arms, or that the arms were folded round him. The latter is somewhat the more probable.

(37) **Whosoever shall receive.**—St. Mark omits part of what St. Matthew records, "Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself . . ," and, with St. Luke, adds the last clause, "Whosoever shall receive Me . ." The climax carries the truth to its completion. When we love a little child in the name of Christ, *i.e.*, for His sake, and after His manner, we are sharers in His spirit, and when we love or receive Him who was one with the Father, we enter into fellowship with Him who is the Supreme and Eternal Love. (Comp. John xiv. 10, 23.)

(38) **And John answered him.**—The incident that follows, omitted by St. Matthew, is recorded by St. Luke in the same connection. It indicates something of the same zeal as that which desired that fire might come from heaven to consume the Samaritans who refused to receive our Lord (Luke ix. 52). The words were so far an "answer" to what our Lord had said, that they were suggested by it. The disciple desired to show, as in self-vindication, that he not only "received" his Master, but that he was unwilling to "receive" any who did not openly follow Him as a disciple. The fact of which he speaks is significant historically as indicating that one of the effects of our Lord's work had been to stir up and quicken the spiritual powers of men outside the range of the company of disciples that gathered round Him. They believed in Him, or they would not have used His Name. They were fellow-workers with Him, for they were seeking to rescue the souls of men from frenzy and despair. Their faith was effective, for, as the narrative implies, they not only claimed the power to cast out *demons*, but did cast them out. The case stood, it is obvious, on an entirely different footing from that of the sons of Sceva, in Acts xix. 13, 14, which at first sight seems to resemble it.

(39) **A miracle.**—Better, *a mighty work*, or *work of power.*

**Lightly.**—Literally, *quickly.* The words are wide-reaching in their range. The true disciples of Christ are to hinder no one who is really doing His work. The very fact that they do it will bring with it reverence and sympathy. They will not quickly be found among those who speak evil of the Son of Man. So of old, Moses answered the prayer of Joshua that he would forbid Eldad and Medad to prophesy in the camp, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets" (Num. xi. 29). So St. Paul rejoiced that every way Christ was preached (Phil. i. 18). So too often have churches and their teachers *not* acted when men were doing the work of Christ, combating evil, relieving not against us is on our part. (41) For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name,[a] because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward. (42) And whosoever shall offend one of *these* little ones that believe in me,[b] it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. (43) And[c] if thy hand offend thee,[1] cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: (44) where their worm dieth not,[d] and the fire is not quenched. (45) And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: (46) where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. (47) And if thine eye offend thee,[1] pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: (48) where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. (49) For every one shall be salted with fire, and

[d] Isa. 66. 24.

[a] Matt. 10. 42.

[b] Matt. 18. 6.

[c] Matt. 5. 29, & 18. 8.

[1] Or, *cause thee to offend.*

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wants, in ways more or less irregular, or with faith more or less imperfect. In all such cases we need to remember the words "Forbid him not . . . he that is not against us is on our side."

(41) **Whosoever shall give you a cup of water.**—See Note on Matt. x. 42. The reproduction of the promise in so different a context is significant as an instance of our Lord's method of teaching, reiterating words of blessing and of wisdom till they were engraved indelibly on the minds of those who heard them.

(42–48) **Whosoever shall offend.**—See Notes on Matt. xviii. 6—9. The verbal, or all but verbal, reproduction of these verses indicates the impression which they had made on the disciples. It may be noted, however, that St. Mark omits the "Woe unto the world because of offences . . ," which we find in St. Matthew, and that the emphatic thrice-repeated words, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched," are found only in St. Mark. It should be noted, however, that in verses 43 and 45 the words "into the fire that never shall be quenched" are omitted in some of the best MSS., and that the same MSS., and others, omit both verses 44 and 46, leaving verse 48 to stand as the only description of Gehenna.

(43) **Into hell.**—Better, *Gehenna,* to distinguish it from the other word "Hades," also translated "Hell." (See Notes on Matt. v. 22.)

(44) **Where their worm dieth not.**—The words are taken almost *literatim* from the closing verse of Isaiah (lxvi. 24), where they appear as part of the description of the triumph of Jehovah. The true worshippers should serve in His Temple continually, and they should go forth and see the carcases of the transgressors, "for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh." The scenery is, like that of Isa. lxiii. 1—6, drawn from the slaughter of earthly battles, and the prophet exults in vision over the putrid carcases and the blazing fires that consume them, and thinks of that scene as perpetuated throughout eternity. The imagery was thus already familiar, and it coalesced naturally with the ideas of Gehenna. Possibly the valley of Hinnom, as the great *cloaca* of Jerusalem, receiving its solid as well as its fluid sewage, with putrid offal and blazing fires consuming them, had become in this way a visible type of the unseen Gehenna; but the authorities are hardly definite enough to warrant the positive statement that it presented such a scene. The interpretation of the symbols (for a literal acceptance of the words is obviously out of the question) is not far to seek. Well-nigh all Christian thinkers have seen in the gnawing worm, the anguish of an endless remorse, the memory of past sins. Fire retains its wonted force as the expression of the righteousness of God (Heb. xii. 29) manifesting itself to the consciousness of the sinner in all its awfulness, purifying where there is any desire, and therefore capacity, for purification, but never altering its essential character, even as the fire "never can be quenched." So much the words declare distinctly, as the law of righteous retribution. They do not absolutely exclude the thought that the fire may consume or destroy that which it cannot purify; still less do they affirm that it will.

(49) **Every one shall be salted with fire.**—The verse presents considerable difficulties, both as regards the reading and the interpretation. Many of the best MSS. omit the latter clause; one of the best omits the first. It is as if transcribers felt that either clause was more intelligible by itself than the two taken together. Accepting both clauses as, on the whole, sufficiently authenticated, we have to deal with their meaning. (1) The most generally received interpretation of the first clause is that which eliminates from the process of salting the idea of purifying, or preserving from corruption, and sees in it only the symbol of perpetuation. So taken, the words become an emphatic assertion of the endlessness of future punishment—as in Keble's lines:

> "Salted with fire, they seem to show
> How spirits lost in endless woe
> May undecaying live."

Against this, however, it may be urged (*a*) that it arbitrarily limits the "every one" of the sentence to those who are finally condemned and are cast into Gehenna; (*b*) that it is scarcely conceivable that the same word, "salted," should be used in such contrasted senses in the same verse; (*c*) that the uniform symbolism of "salt," as representing the spiritual element that purifies and preserves from taint (see Matt. v. 13; Luke xiv. 34; Col. iv. 6; Lev. ii. 13), is against this application of it. We have to ask whether "fire" appears with a like symbolism and with an application as universal as that of this verse. And the answer is found partly in "the baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire," of which the Baptist spoke (Matt. iii. 11); the "fire already kindled" of our Lord's teaching (Luke xii. 49); the "fire" which "shall try every man's work of what sort it is" of 1 Cor. iii. 13; the "fire that tries men's faith" of 1 Pet. i. 7. In these passages there can be no shadow of doubt that "fire" represents the every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.[a] (50) Salt *is* good:[b] but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

CHAPTER X.—(1) And he arose from thence,[c] and cometh into the coasts of Judæa by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.

(2) And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away *his* wife? tempting him. (3) And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? (4) And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put *her* away. (5) And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. (6) But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. (7) For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife: (8) and they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. (9) What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. (10) And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same *matter*. (11) And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife,[d] and marry another, committeth adultery against her. (12) And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

(13) And they brought young children to him,[e] that he should touch them: and *his* disciples rebuked those that brought *them*. (14) But when Jesus saw *it*, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to

a Lev. 2. 13.
b Matt. 5. 13.
A.D. 33.
c Matt. 19. 1.
d Matt. 5. 32, & 19. 9.
e Matt. 19. 31.

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righteousness of God manifested as punishing and chastising—the discipline, in other words, of suffering. Of that discipline, our Lord says "every one" shall be a partaker. He shall thus be "salted with fire," for the tendency of that fire, the aim of the sufferings which it represents, is to purify and cleanse. Even when manifested in its most awful forms, it is still true that they who "walk righteously and speak uprightly" may dwell with "everlasting burnings"—*i.e.*, with the perfect and consuming holiness of God (Isa. xxxiii. 14). (2) The second clause is obviously far simpler. The "sacrifice" throws us back upon the ritual of Lev. ii. 13, which prescribed that salt should be added, as the natural symbol of incorruption, to every sacrifice. Here our Lord speaks of the spiritual sacrifice which each man offers of his body, soul, and spirit (Rom. xii. 1), and declares that "salt," the purifying grace of the Eternal Spirit, is needed that it may be acceptable. Punishment, the pain which we feel when brought into contact with the infinite Righteousness represented by fire, may do its work in part; but it requires something more for completeness. The sacrifice must be "salted with salt," as well as with "fire." To use another figure, there must be the baptism of the Holy Ghost, as well as that of fire (Matt. iii. 11).

(50) **Salt is good.**—See Note on Matt. v. 13. There, however, the primary reference of the words is to the visible community of believers, the Church of Christ, as preserving the world from corruption. Here the words speak primarily of the inward grace, of which the salt is the symbol, and which alone makes the Church what it ought to be, as "the salt of the earth."

**Have salt in yourselves.**—The words that follow, "have peace in yourselves," seem to refer to the contention in verse 33, with which this portion of our Lord's teaching had begun. The purity from selfish aims, which was symbolised by the "salt," was the chief or only preservative of peace.

X.

(1) **And he arose from thence.**—We may note, as some help to a right study of the Gospel narrative, that the best harmonists place Matt. xviii. 15—35, Luke x. 1—xvii. 10 (with the exception of xv. 3—7), and John vii. 1—xi. 54, between the 9th and 10th chapters of this Gospel. The "farther side of Jordan" implies what is known as the Peræan ministry of our Lord, and which is related only by St. Luke.

**Resort unto him.**—Literally, *come together*, or *journey together*.

(2—12) **And the Pharisees came to him.**—See Notes on Matt. xix. 3—12. We are not surprised to find St. Mark omitting the "hard saying" about the eunuchs of Matt. xix. 12. It was hardly likely, even if he knew it, to commend itself to him as adapted for the Gentile readers for whom he wrote his Gospel. Probably, however, for the reason thus given, it was not part of the current teaching of the Church, and was recorded by St. Matthew as something exceptional.

(10) **And in the house.**—St. Mark's narrative is, on the whole, much shorter than St. Matthew's; but this detail of the question coming from the disciples after they had entered the house is given by him only.

(12) **And if a woman shall put away.**—This also is peculiar to St. Mark, and it is noticeable, as being the only passage in our Lord's teaching which distinctly states the case referred to, and passes sentence on the wife who divorces her husband and marries again, as well as on the husband who divorces his wife, and the wife who is so divorced. All three cases are dealt with on the same grounds: (1) that the marriage relationship ought to be indissoluble, and that one cause only justifies or permits its dissolution; and (2) that any further permission of divorce is but a concession to the hardness of men's hearts for the avoidance of greater evils.

(13—15) **And they brought young children.**—See Notes on Matt. xix. 13—15.

(14) **He was much displeased.**—The word, as used by our Lord, is peculiar to St. Mark; St. Matthew uses it of the disciples (xx. 24, xxvi. 8) and of the chief priests (xxi. 15).

come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. (15) Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. (16) And he took them up in his arms, put *his* hands upon them, and blessed them.

(17) And when he was gone forth into the way,[a] there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? (18) And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is* none good but one, *that is*, God. (19) Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. (20) And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth. (21) Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. (22) And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

(23) And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! (24) And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! (25) It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. (26) And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? (27) And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men *it is* impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

(28) Then Peter began to say unto him,[b] Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. (29) And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or

[a] Matt. 19. 16.

[b] Matt. 19. 27.

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(15) **Verily I say unto you.**—St. Matthew does not give the verse. St. Mark has it in common with St. Luke. To receive the kingdom of God "as a little child," is to receive it after the manner of a child, with simplicity and faith, humility and love. Unless these conditions were fulfilled, those who were disputing who was the greatest in it, were as if they had not even entered it.

(16) **And he took them up in his arms.**—Better, *folded them in His arms,* leaving the question whether they were lifted from the ground open. The word is used by St. Mark only. The actual "blessing," though implied in St. Matthew, is also definitely mentioned by him only.

(17—27) **And when he was gone forth.**—Better, *as He was going forth.* (See Notes on Matt. xix. 16—26.)

**Running, and kneeled to him.**—Another of St. Mark's vividly descriptive touches. The adjective "good," which is wanting in the better MSS. of St. Matthew, is the true reading here. St. Mark and St. Luke give the word "inherit," instead of St. Matthew's "have," or "possess."

(18) **Why callest thou me good?**—Our Lord's question is, in St. Mark's report, in harmony with that of the seeker after life eternal. Its obvious drift was to force him back upon the conditions of absolute goodness, to make him ask himself how far, and under what conditions, that word might be used relatively of any child of man.

(19) **Defraud not.**—Peculiar to St. Mark. It seems as if intended to be a special application of the Tenth Commandment. One who had great possessions, gathered in the usual ways by which men gain wealth, needed to examine himself specially by that text. Were there no ill-gotten gains in his treasure? Had no wages of the reaper been kept back; no sharp bargains driven with widows or orphans or the poor?

(21) **Then Jesus beholding him loved him.**—Better, *looking,* or *gazing on him.* The fact is narrated by St. Mark only, and implies that the love showed itself in the stedfast look, perhaps also in the kiss upon the brow with which the Rabbis of the time showed their approval of their more promising disciples.

**Come, take up the cross.**—This also is peculiar to St. Mark. In using such words our Lord taught the questioner, as He had before taught His disciples, with what clear prevision He looked forward to the form and manner of His death.

(22) **And he was sad at that saying.**—Better, *He frowned.* The word is the same as that translated "lowering" in Matt. xvi. 3.

(23) **And Jesus looked round.**—The glance and gesture are mentioned by St. Mark only.

(24) **How hard is it for them that trust in riches.**—The words have the appearance of limiting, and so softening, the seeming sternness of the previous utterance. There is, however, good reason for thinking, as they are wanting in the best MSS., that they were added by some one who sought to tone down the words of warning to what seemed a rational medium. Omitting the doubtful words, the sentence runs, "How hard is it to enter into the kingdom of God!"—hard alike for rich and poor, though, as the words that follow show, it was hardest for the former.

(28—31) **Then Peter began to say unto him.**—See Notes on Matt. xix. 27—30. St. Mark omits the question which St. Matthew adds to St. Peter's words, "What shall we have therefore?"

(29) **Verily I say unto you.**—St. Mark, possibly as writing for Gentile converts, omits the special pro-

brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, (30) but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. (31) But many *that are* first shall be last;[a] and the last first.

(32) And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem;[b] and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him, (33) *saying*, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: (34) and they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.

(35) And James and John,[c] the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire. (36) And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? (37) They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory. (38) But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? (39) And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: (40) but to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared. (41) And when the ten heard *it*, they began to be much displeased with James and John. (42) But Jesus called them *to him*, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted[1] to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them;[d] and their great ones exercise authority upon them. (43) But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: (44) and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. (45) For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

(46) And they came to Jericho:[e] and

[a] Matt. 19. 30.

[b] Matt. 20. 17.

[1] Or, *think good.*

[d] Luke 22. 25.

[c] Matt. 20. 20.

[e] Matt. 20. 29.

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mise to the Twelve, that they should "sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. xix. 28).

(30) **With persecutions.**—Peculiar to St. Mark. (See Notes on Matt. xix. 29.) We may, perhaps, venture to think of them as having been engraved on Peter's mind by the lessons of his experience. He had been taught to see in the "fiery trial" almost the necessary condition of the "exceeding joy" (1 Pet. iv. 12, 13).

(31) **Many that are first shall be last.**—It will be noted that St. Mark omits the parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard, which follows in St. Matthew as an illustration of the truth.

(32–34) **And they were in the way.**—See Notes on Matt. xx. 17—19.

**Jesus went before them.**—Better, *was leading the way.* The word is the same as that used in Matt. xxi. 9, 31. The graphic picture of the order in which the Master and the disciples were at this time travelling is eminently characteristic of St. Mark. The special mention of "the Twelve" implies that there were other disciples, possibly the Seventy of Luke x. 1, and the "devout women" of Luke viii. 1.

**And they were amazed.**—We have clearly in these words a vivid reproduction of states of feeling which the disciples remembered, but for which the facts related hardly give a sufficient explanation. Probably the words that had just been spoken—still more, perhaps, the look and tone which accompanied them—and the silent withdrawal from converse with them, struck all the disciples with a vague fear, and the Twelve with absolute terror.

(34) **Shall spit upon him.**—In common with St. Luke, but not with St. Matthew.

(35–45) **And James and John.**—See Notes on Matt. xx. 20—28. In St. Matthew, their mother is represented as coming with them, and uttering her prayer for them.

(38) **And be baptized with the baptism.**—The clause seems to have been found originally in St. Mark only, and to have been added afterwards by the transcribers of St. Matthew to bring the reports of the two Gospels into more entire agreement.

(39) **And with the baptism.**—Here, as before, the clause is omitted in the best MSS. of St. Matthew, and is therefore, strictly speaking, peculiar to St. Mark.

(40) **But it shall be given to them.**—Better, omitting the interpolated words, *is not Mine to give, but to those for whom it has been prepared.* Our Lord disclaims, not the power to give, but that of giving arbitrarily, otherwise than His Father willed.

(42) **Exercise lordship . . . . exercise authority.**—On the force of the two words, see Note on Matt. xx. 25.

(43) **Shall be your minister.**—Substantially the same as in St. Matthew, but note in both verses the variation, "*shall be* your minister," "*shall be* servant," instead of "let him be."

(46–52) **And they came to Jericho.**—See Notes on Matt. xx. 29—34. St. Mark agrees with St. Matthew in placing the miracle as the disciples were leaving Jericho, and differs from him in speaking of one blind man only, and in giving his name.

as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimæus, the son of Timæus, sat by the highway side begging. (47) And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, *thou* son of David, have mercy on me. (48) And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, *Thou* son of David, have mercy on me. (49) And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. (50) And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. (51) And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. (52) And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.[1] And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

CHAPTER XI.—(1) And when they came nigh to Jerusalem,[a] unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples, (2) and saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring *him.* (3) And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither. (4) And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met; and they loose him. (5) And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt? (6) And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go. (7) And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and he sat upon him. (8) And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed *them* in the way. (9) And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord: (10) Blessed *be* the kingdom of our father

[1] Or, *saved thee.*

A.D. 33.

[a] Matt. 21. 1.

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**Blind Bartimæus.**—Better, as giving the same order as the Greek, *the son of Timæus, Bartimæus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the wayside begging.* The later MSS. have the definite article before "blind," as though he were well known and conspicuous. It is noticeable that the name was Greek with the Aramaic prefix Bar (=son), a combination not found elsewhere.

(49) **And commanded him to be called.**—The better MSS. give, more vividly, "and said, Call him."

**Be of good comfort.**—The cheering words of the disciples or by-standers are given by St. Mark only, as is also the eager action of the man "casting *off* his garment (*i e.*, the outer mantle) and *leaping up*." The Greek word, in the better MSS. is much stronger than the English "rose."

(51) **Lord.**—Better *Rabboni,* the word being the same as in John xx. 16, and occurring in these two passages only. The word was an augmentative form of Rabbi, and as such expressed greater reverence. It takes its place as another example of St. Mark's fondness for reproducing the very syllables that were spoken.

(52) **Followed Jesus in the way.**—We may reasonably infer from this that Bartimæus was one of those who went up with the travelling company to Jerusalem. The prominence which St. Mark gives to his name suggests the thought that he afterwards became more or less conspicuous in the Church of the Circumcision, his new-found gift of sight qualifying him to take his place among the eye-witnesses of the things that were done in the ensuing week. In the Apocryphal *Gospel of Nicodemus* he appears as one of the witnesses for the defence on our Lord's trial.

### XI.

(1—10) **And when they came nigh.**—See Notes on Matt. xxi. 1—11.

**Unto Bethphage and Bethany.**—The better MSS. give "Bethany" only.

(2) **A colt tied.**—St. Mark, with St. Luke and St. John, omits the mention of the "she-ass" bound with the colt, on which St. Matthew lays stress as a literal fulfilment of Zech. ix. 9.

**Whereon never man sat.**—The fact is mentioned by St. Mark and St. Luke only.

(4) **Without in a place where two ways met.**—Each touch is characteristic of St. Mark, and implies personal observation on the part of his informant. The colt was at the door—outside, not inside, the court-yard; it was not at "a place," but at "*the* place," as we speak of "*the* cross-roads," where two ways met.

(5) **And certain of them that stood there.**—This again, though perhaps implied in our Lord's words, is not reported by St. Matthew.

(8) **Branches off the trees.**—The Greek word for "branches" is used by St. Mark only. It describes the leafy boughs forming, as they were thrown down, a kind of litter or matting, rather than the woody branches.

**Off the trees.**—The better MSS. give "from the fields," a reading which, perhaps, agrees better with the account of the "branches" given in the preceding Note.

**And strawed them in the way.**—Omitted in the better MSS.

(10) **Blessed be the kingdom.**—The shout of blessing for the kingdom as well as for the king, is

David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest. (11) And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the Twelve.

(12) And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry; (13) and seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves,[a] he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not *yet*. (14) And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard *it*.

(15) And they come to Jerusalem:[b] and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves; (16) and would not suffer that any man should carry *any* vessel through the temple. (17) And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves. (18) And the scribes and chief priests heard *it*, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine. (19) And when even was come, he went out of the city.

(20) And in the morning,[c] as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. (21) And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away. (22) And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.[1] (23) For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. (24) Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire,[d] when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*. (25) And when ye stand praying, forgive,[e] if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your

[c] Matt. 21. 19.

[a] Matt. 21. 19.

[1] Or, *Have the faith of God.*

[b] Matt. 21. 12.

[d] Matt. 7. 7.

[e] Matt. 6. 14.

another touch by which St. Mark's record is distinguished from the others.

(11) **And now the eventide was come.**—On the apparent discrepancy between St. Mark's narrative and that of St. Matthew and St. Luke, see Note on Matt. xxi. 12. The minuteness and precision of St. Mark's report are in themselves, *primâ facie*, an evidence in its favour. The word "eventide" is somewhat indefinite, but it included the two or three hours before sunset, as well as after. The procession, if it started in the morning, had probably been delayed by frequent halts, and its movement through such a dense crowd must have been but slow.

(12—14) **And on the morrow.**—On the chronological difficulty presented by this verse, see Note on Matt. xxi. 18, 19.

(13) **For the time of figs was not yet.**—It has been sometimes urged that this gives the reason for our Lord's coming to seek "if haply he might find" fruit. The fig season had not come, and therefore the fruit, if any had been borne, would not have been gathered. There is nothing, however, against taking the words in their more natural sequence. The precocious foliage had suggested the thought that some of the early ripe figs might be already formed; but it was no exception, as far as fruit was concerned, to others of its kind. For it, as for them, the season, even of the earliest fruit, had not come. The seeing the fig-tree "afar off," is a touch peculiar to St. Mark, and adds force to the narrative, as implying a keener pressure of hunger than St. Matthew's description.

(15—19) **And Jesus went into the temple.**—See Notes on Matt. xxi. 12—17.

(16) **And would not suffer that any man.**—Peculiar to St. Mark. The vessels referred to included, probably, the baskets and other common implements of traffic. Men were using the courts of the Temple as a short cut from one part of the city to another.

(18) **They feared him.**—Peculiar to St. Mark. Note also his omission of the facts recorded by St. Matthew: (1) the healing of the blind and the lame in the Temple; (2) the children crying Hosanna.

(19) **And when even was come.**—Another note of time peculiar to St. Mark.

(20—25) **And in the morning.**—See Notes on Matt. xxi. 20—22.

(21—22) **And Peter calling to remembrance.**—St. Mark alone names Peter as the speaker. The form of our Lord's answer, "Have faith in God," is also peculiar to him.

(23) **Those things . . . he shall have whatsoever he saith.**—The better MSS. give, "that *the thing* which he saith cometh to pass," and "he shall have *it*." The promise is specific rather than general in its form, and so prepares the way for the wider generalisation of the next verse.

(24) **Believe that ye receive them.**—The better MSS. give the latter verb in the past tense, "Believe that ye received them." It is obvious that, as a rule, such words imply prayer for spiritual rather than temporal blessings. In that region the subjective faith becomes an objective reality. We are to believe, not that we shall one day have what we pray for in a future more or less distant, but that we actually receive it as we pray. In most, if not in all cases, in prayer for peace, pardon, illumination, the promise, though it sounds hyperbolical, is psychologically true.

(25—26) **And when ye stand praying, forgive.**—See Notes on Matt. vi. 14. The reproduction of the words which are recorded as having been spoken in the trespasses. (26) But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

(27) And they come again to Jerusalem: and as he was walking in the temple,[a] there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders, (28) and say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things? (29) And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question,[1] and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. (30) The baptism of John, was *it* from heaven, or of men? answer me. (31) And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him? (32) But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all *men* counted John, that he was a prophet indeed. (33) And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

a Matt. 21. 23.

1 Or, *thing.*

CHAPTER XII.—(1) And he began to speak unto them by parables.[b] A *certain* man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about *it*, and digged *a place for* the winefat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country. (2) And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard. (3) And they caught *him*, and beat him, and sent *him* away empty. (4) And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded *him* in the head, and sent *him* away shamefully handled. (5) And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some. (6) Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son. (7) But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be our's. (8) And they took him, and killed *him*, and cast *him* out of the vineyard. (9) What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others. (10) And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:[c] (11) this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? (12) And they sought to lay hold on him, but

A.D. 33.

b Matt. 21. 33.

c Ps. 118. 22.

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Sermon on the Mount, is very significant. The prayer even of intensest faith is not perfect, unless the temper of the worshipper is also that of the Charity which forgives offences. Such words exclude from the prayers of Christ's disciples wishes more or less vindictive, which, as in Pss. lxix., cix., had seemed natural and right under a less perfect manifestation of the will and mind of the Father.

(27–33) **And they come again to Jerusalem.**—See Notes on Matt. xxi. 23—27. Peculiar to St. Mark is the fact that our Lord was "walking" as well as teaching in the Temple.

(32) **That he was a prophet indeed.**—The intensifying adverb is one of St. Mark's graphic touches of emphasis.

(33) **We cannot tell.**—Better, as also in Matt. xxi. 27, *We do not know.* The repetition of the verb "tell" in the English, gives an unreal emphasis which is not in the Greek. The real stress lies on the pronoun "I."

### XII.

(1–12) **And he began to speak unto them by parables.**—See Notes on Matt. xxi. 33—36. The parable which, like that of the Sower, and like that only, is related in all the first three Gospels, was one which had obviously impressed itself strongly, as that had done, on the minds of those who heard it, and was reproduced by independent reporters with an almost textual exactness.

**A place for the winefat.**—Better, simply, *a vine vat.*

(2) **A servant.**—The variations in the reports are, as has been said, few and slight, but it may as well be noted that St. Mark speaks of "one servant" having been sent, and then another, and another, and then many others, while St. Matthew divides them simply into two great groups. St. Mark, characteristically, seizes on the most vivid presentation of the facts.

(4) **At him they cast stones.**—The participle so rendered is wanting in the best MSS., and probably originated in a marginal note explaining how the labourers wounded the second servant.

(6) **His well-beloved.**—Added by St. Mark to St. Matthew's briefer form, "he sent unto them his son."

(9) **He will come and destroy the husbandmen.**—St. Matthew reports the words as having been spoken by the by-standers. Here they form part of the parable itself. We may think of them as having been probably taken up and repeated by our Lord after they had been uttered by others.

(11) **This was the Lord's doing.**—Better, *This was from the Lord.* The pronoun in the Greek is in the feminine, agreeing with the "head of the corner."

(12) **They sought to lay hold on him.**—The pronoun carries us back to the "chief priests and scribes and elders" of chap. xi. 27.

feared the people: for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way.

(13) And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians,[a] to catch him in *his* words. (14) And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not? (15) Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny,[1] that I may see *it*. (16) And they brought *it*. And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cæsar's. (17) And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.

(18) Then come unto him the Sadducees,[b] which say there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying, (19) Master, Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave *his* wife *behind him*, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. (20) Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed. (21) And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and the third likewise. (22) And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also. (23) In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife. (24) And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God? (25) For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven. (26) And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I *am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? (27) He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.

(28) And one of the scribes came,[c] and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? (29) And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: (30) and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. (31) And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. (32) And the scribe said unto him, Well,

[a] Matt. 22. 15.

[1] Valuing of our money seven-pence halfpenny, as Matt. 18. 28.

[c] Matt. 22. 35.

[b] Matt. 22. 23.

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(13) **They send unto him.**—In Matthew the Pharisees are said to have "taken counsel," or "held a council," and then to have sent their disciples. Here the act appears more definitely as the result of a coalition of the two parties named. On the narrative as a whole, see Notes on Matt. xx. 15—22.

**To catch.**—Better, *to entrap.*

(14) **Thou regardest not the person of men.**—The phrase is essentially Hebrew in its form, but had been made familiar by the Greek Version of the Old Testament.

(15) **But he, knowing their hypocrisy.**—St. Mark uses the specific word that describes the sin of the questioners, instead of the more general "wickedness" of St. Matthew. On the other hand, he omits the word "hypocrites" as applied to them by our Lord.

(16) **Superscription.**—Better, *inscription*, as in Matt. xxii. 20.

(18—27) **Then come unto him the Sadducees.**—See Notes on Matt. xxii. 15—22.

(24) **Because ye know not the scriptures.**—More literally, as in St. Matthew, *not knowing the scriptures.*

(26) **How in the bush God spake unto him.**—Better, *at the bush, how God spake to him.* The reference to the bush, not given by St. Matthew, is common both to St. Mark and St. Luke, and the order of the words in the Greek of both shows that they point to "the bush," not as the place in which God spoke, but as the title or heading by which the section Ex. iii. was commonly described.

(28—34) **And one of the scribes came.**—See Notes on Matt. xxii. 34—40. St. Mark's description is somewhat less precise than St. Matthew's "one of them (*i.e.*, the Pharisees), a lawyer." The form of the question differs by the substitution of "first of all" for "great" commandment.

(29) **Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord.**—The quotation is given more fully by St. Mark than by St. Matthew. The opening words (from Deut. vi. 4) were in common use under the name of the *Shemà* (the Hebrew for "Hear"), and formed the popular expression of the faith of Israel. To say the *Shemà* was a passport into Paradise for any child of Abraham.

(31) **And the second is like, namely, this . .**—Better, *And the second is this.* The better MSS. omit "like."

(32) **Well, Master, thou hast said the truth.**—Better, *Well hast Thou said truly that there is one God.* The words seem intentionally repeated from verse 14,

Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: (33) and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. (34) And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him *any question*.

(35) And Jesus answered and said,[a] while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David? (36) For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. (37) David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he *then* his son? And the common people heard him gladly.

(38) And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing,[b] and *love* salutations in the marketplaces, (39) and the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts: (40) which devour widows' houses,[c] and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.

(41) And Jesus sat over against the treasury,[d] and beheld how the people cast money[1] into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. (42) And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites,[2] which make a farthing. (43) And he

[b] Matt. 23. 5.

[c] Matt. 23. 14.

[a] Matt. 22. 41.

[d] Luke 21. 1.

[1] *A piece of brass money:* See Matt. 10. 9.

[2] It is the seventh part of one piece of that brass money.

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but are uttered now, not with the covert sneer of the hypocrite, but in the sincerity of admiration. Note also the real reverence shown in the form of address, "Master," *i.e.*, "Teacher, Rabbi." He recognises the speaker as one of his own order. This, and all that follows, is peculiar to St. Mark, and is an addition of singular interest, as showing the existence among the scribes of some who accepted our Lord's teaching as to the spiritual meaning of the Law, and were able to distinguish between its essence and its accidents.

(33) **Is more than all whole burnt offerings . .**—There is a fervour in the eloquence of the scribe's answer which indicates the earnestness, almost the enthusiasm, of conviction. Such teaching as that of 1 Sam. xv. 22, Ps. l. 8—14, Mic. vi. 6, had not been in vain for him.

(34) **Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.**—The words are significant as showing the unity of our Lord's teaching. Now, as when He spoke the Sermon on the Mount, the righteousness which fulfils the law is the condition of the entrance into the kingdom of God (Matt. v. 19, 20). Even the recognition of that righteousness as consisting in the fulfilment of the two commandments that were exceeding broad, brought a man as to the very threshold of the Kingdom. It is instructive to compare our Lord's different method of dealing, in Luke x. 25—37, with one who had the same theoretical knowledge, but who obviously, consciously or unconsciously, minimised the force of the commandments by his narrowing definitions.

**And no man after that durst ask him.**—St. Mark states the fact before, St. Matthew after, the narrative that now follows.

(35) **While he taught in the temple.**—The locality is named by St. Mark only, but it is all but implied in the other two Gospels.

(36) **David himself said by the Holy Ghost.**—St. Mark is more emphatic in ascribing the words of David to the influence of the Holy Spirit than either St. Matthew, who simply quotes, or St. Luke, who uses the more general phrase "in spirit." (Comp. 2 Pet. i. 21.)

(37) **And the common people.**—Better, *the great body of the people.* Stress is laid on the multitude, not on the social condition, of those who thus heard gladly.

(38—40) **In his doctrine.**—Better, *in His teaching.* See Notes on Matt. xxiii. 1—7. St. Mark's report is characteristically brief as compared with St. Matthew, and would seem to have been drawn from the same source as St. Luke's (xx. 45—47).

(40) **Which devour widow's houses.**—Here the word has a special force as coming after the mention of the feasts. They seek the highest places at such banquets, our Lord seems to say, and when there, this is what they feast on. The special charge is not reported by St. Matthew in this connection, but occurs in chap. xxiii. 14, where see Note. The better MSS., indeed, omit it even there. The relative pronoun gives a wrong idea of the construction. We have really a new sentence. "They that devour . . . these shall receive . . ."

(41) **And Jesus sat over against the treasury.**—The narrative that follows is found in St. Luke also, but not in St. Matthew. The word used is not the "Corban" of Matt. xxvii. 6, and is, perhaps, more definitely local. The treasure-chamber of the Temple would receive the alms which were dropped into the trumpet-shaped vessels that stood near the entrance for the purpose of receiving them, but they probably contained also the cups and other implements of gold and silver that were used in the Temple ritual.

**Cast money into.**—The word indicates primarily copper or bronze coin, but probably, like the French *argent*, had acquired a wider range of meaning.

(42) **And there came a certain poor widow.**—The position of the narrative gives to the description all the vividness of contrast. Among the "many" who cast in much must have been some at least of the Pharisees who devoured widows' houses. Here was a widow whose house had been devoured, and who yet showed by her act that she kept the two great commandments, which the scribes themselves declared to be above all burnt offerings and sacrifices.

**Two mites, which make a farthing.**—The "farthing" is one of the Latin words which characterise this Gospel, and represents the *quadrans*, or fourth-part of a Roman *as*. The primary meaning of the word rendered "mite" is "thin" or "tiny."

(43) **And he called unto him his disciples.**—The act was significant. He sought to teach them to

called *unto him* his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: (44) for all *they* did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, *even* all her living.

CHAPTER XIII.—(1) And as he went out of the temple,[a] one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings *are here!* (2) And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. (3) And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, (4) Tell us, when shall these things be?[b] and what *shall be* the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled? (5) And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any *man* deceive you: (6) for many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ;* and shall deceive many. (7) And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for *such things* must needs be; but the end *shall* not *be* yet. (8) For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these *are* the beginnings of sorrows.[1]

(9) But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a

A.D. 33.

[a] Matt. 24. 1.

[b] Matt. 24. 3.

judge of acts by other than a quantitative standard. For him the widow's mites and the ointment that might have been sold for 300 pence stood on the same level, so far as each was the expression of a generous and self-sacrificing love.

(44) **They did cast in of their abundance . . she of her want.**—The contrast between the two Greek words is somewhat stronger: *They of their superfluity . . . she of her deficiency.* We recognise the same standard of judgment, possibly even an allusive reference to our Lord's language, in St. Paul's praises of the churches of Macedonia, whose "deep poverty" had "abounded unto the riches of their liberality" (2 Cor. viii. 1—2).

**Even all her living.**—This was not necessarily involved in the act itself, but the woman may have become known to our Lord in one of His previous visits to Jerusalem, or we may see in the statement an instance of His divine insight into the lives and characters of men, like that shown in the case of the woman of Samaria (John iv. 18).

## XIII.

(1) **One of his disciples.**—Note St. Mark's vivid way of giving the very words of the disciple, instead of saying with St. Matthew that they "came to show" the buildings of the Temple.

Here, again, the juxtaposition of narratives in St. Mark gives them a special point. The "stones" of Herod's Temple (for it was to him chiefly that it owed its magnificence) were of sculptured marble. The "buildings," or structures, included columns, chambers, porticos that were, as St. Luke tells us (xxi. 5), the votive offerings of the faithful. The disciples gazed on these with the natural admiration of Galilean peasants. In spite of the lesson they had just received—a lesson meant, it may be, to correct the tendency which our Lord discerned—they were still measuring things by their quantity and size. They admired the "goodly stones" more than the "widow's mite." They were now to be taught that, while the one should be spoken of throughout the whole world, the other should be destroyed, so that not a vestige should remain. We cannot say who spoke the words, but it is at least probable that it came from one of the four who are named in verse 3.

(3) **Over against the temple.**—The view which the position commanded, and which St. Mark alone mentions, made all that followed more vivid and impressive. It may well have been at or near the very spot at which, a few days before, He had paused as "He beheld the city and wept over it" (Luke xix. 41).

**Peter and James and John and Andrew.**—The list of names is noticeable (1) as being given by St. Mark only; (2) as the only instance in which the name of Andrew appears in conjunction with the three who were on other occasions within the inner circle of companionship; (3) in the position given to Andrew, though the first called of the disciples (John i. 41), as the last in the list.

(4) **When shall these things be?**—Note, as, perhaps, characteristic of a Gospel written for Gentiles, the use of the vaguer words for the more definite "sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world," in Matt. xxiv. 3.

(5) **And Jesus answering them began to say.**—The report which follows, common as it is to the first three Gospels, serves as an admirable example of the extent of variation compatible with substantial accuracy, and with the recognition of an inspired guidance as ensuring that accuracy. The discourse obviously made a deep impression on those who heard it, as afterwards on those to whom they repeated it, and so it passed from mouth to mouth, but probably it was not committed to writing till the events which it foretold came within the horizon. On all points common to the three records, see Notes on Matt. xxiv.

(6) **I am Christ.**—Literally, *I am He.* The word Christ being a necessary inference from the context.

(7) **For such things must needs be.**—Better, *for it must needs be.*

(9) **But take heed to yourselves.**—The emphatic repetition of the warning is peculiar to St. Mark (comp. verse 23). The description of the sufferings of the disciples (verses 9—13) is found in Luke xxi. 12 and in Matt. x. 17—22 (where see Notes), but not in St. Matthew's report of this discourse.

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[1] The word in the original importeth *the pains of a woman in travail.*

testimony against them. (10) And the gospel must first be published among all nations. (11) But when they shall lead *you*,[a] and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. (12) Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against *their* parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. (13) And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

(14) But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation,[b] spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judæa flee to the mountains: (15) and let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter *therein*, to take any thing out of his house: (16) and let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment. (17) But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! (18) And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter. (19) For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. (20) And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days. (21) And then if any man shall say to you,[c] Lo, here *is* Christ; or, lo, *he is* there; believe *him* not: (22) for false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if *it were* possible, even the elect. (23) But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.

(24) But in those days,[d] after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, (25) and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. (26) And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. (27) And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven. (28) Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near: (29) so ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, *even* at the doors. (30) Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done. (31) Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

(32) But of that day and *that* hour

[a] Matt. 10. 19.

[b] Matt. 24. 15.

[c] Matt. 24. 23.

[d] Matt. 24. 29.

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(11) **It is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.**—In the parallel passage of Matt. x. 20 we have, "the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." In Luke xxi. 15, "I will give you a mouth and wisdom." St. Mark's use of the more definite term reminds us of chap. xii. 36 (where see Note), and may, probably, be connected with St. Peter's habitual language. (Comp. Acts ii. 33—38; viii. 15; x. 47; 2 Pet. i. 21.)

(12) **Now the brother.**—Literally, *and the brother.*

(14—23) **But when ye shall see.**—See Notes on Matt. xxiv. 15—28.

**Standing where it ought not.**—St. Mark substitutes this for "in the holy place" of St. Matthew. Of the two, the former seems, in its enigmatic form, more likely to have been the phrase actually used; the latter to have been an explanation. The words "spoken of by Daniel the prophet" are omitted in many of the best MSS.

(18) **Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.**—Note St. Mark's omission of "nor on the Sabbath day," which is prominent in St. Matthew's report, as characteristic of a Gospel for Gentile readers.

(19) **From the beginning of the creation which God created.**—Note the fuller form which replaces St. Matthew's "from the beginning of the world."

(23) **Take ye heed.**—The repetition of the warning word, as in verse 9, is peculiar to St. Mark.

(24—31) **But in those days.**—See Notes on Matt. xxiv. 29—35.

(26) **Then shall they see the Son of man.**—Note the simpler form, which at once replaces and explains St. Matthew's "the sign of the Son of Man."

(27) **Then shall he send his angels.**—Note the absence of the "trumpet," which is prominent in St. Matthew.

(28) **Ye know that summer is near.**—Many of the best MSS. give "it is known," but it may fairly be assumed, from the parallel passages in St. Matthew and St. Luke, that this was the error of an early transcriber of the document which served as a basis for the reports of all the three Evangelists.

(32—37) **But of that day and that hour.**—See Notes on Matt. xxiv. 36—41.

**Neither the Son.**—The addition to St. Matthew's report is every way remarkable. It indicates the self-imposed limitation of the divine attributes which had belonged to our Lord as the eternal Son, and the acquiescence in a power and knowledge which, like that of the human nature which He assumed, were derived and therefore finite. Such a limitation is knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. (33) Take ye heed,[a] watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. (34) *For the Son of man is* as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. (35) Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: (36) lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. (37) And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

A.D. 33.

b Matt. 26. 2.

a Matt. 24. 42.

c Matt. 26. 6.

1 Or, *pure nard*, or, *liquid nard*.

CHAPTER XIV.—(1) After two days was *the feast of* the passover,[b] and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put *him* to death. (2) But they said, Not on the feast *day*, lest there be an uproar of the people.

(3) And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper,[c] as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard[1] very precious; and she brake the box, and poured *it* on his head. (4) And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the oint-

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implied by St. Paul, when he says that our Lord "being in the form of God . . . made Himself of no reputation" (or better, *emptied Himself*), "and took upon Him the form of a servant." (See Note on Phil. ii. 6, 7.) It is clear that we cannot consistently take the word "knoweth" as having a different meaning in this clause from that which it bears in the others; and we must therefore reject all interpretations which explain away the force of the words as meaning only that the Son did not declare His knowledge of the time of the far-off event.

(33) **Take ye heed.**—Note once more the characteristic iteration of the warning. It would almost seem, from the very different conclusions of the discourse in the three Gospels, as if they had been based up to this point on a common document which then stopped and left them to a greater divergency of memory or tradition. The omission of St. Matthew's reference to the history of Noah is, perhaps, characteristic of St. Mark's as a Gentile Gospel.

(34) **For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey.**—The italics indicate, as usual, that the words are not found in the Greek. Their absence, seeming, as they do, essential to the meaning of the sentence, is singular. A possible explanation is, that we have an imperfect fragmentary report, as from a note taken at the time, of that which appears, in a developed form, as the parable of the Talents in Matt. xxv. 14—30.

**And commanded the porter to watch.**—This feature is unique in our Lord's parables, and, as such, seems to call for a special interpretation. The "servants" we accept at once as the disciples, and we understand generally what was the authority and the work assigned to them. But who was specifically the "gate-keeper" or "porter"? The answer appears to be found in the promise of the keys of the kingdom that had been made to St. Peter (Matt. xvi. 19). It was his work to open the door of that kingdom wide, to be ready for his Lord's coming in any of those manifold senses which experience would unfold to him. We may accordingly venture to trace in St. Mark's record, here as elsewhere, the influence of the Apostle. That word "the porter" was, he felt, meant for him, and this he remembered when much that had been recorded by others had faded from his recollection. If we adopt this application of the word here, it throws light on the somewhat difficult reference to the "porter" of the sheep-fold in John x. 3.

(35) **The master of the house.**—Better, *the Lord of the house.* The Greek word is not the same as that commonly rendered the "goodman" or "master" of the house.

**At even, or at midnight.**—The four times correspond roughly to the four watches of the night, beginning at 9 P.M., 12, 3 A.M., 6 A.M. The words may be noted as having left, and having been intended to leave, on St. Peter's mind, the impression that the promise of the coming of his Lord was undefined as to times or seasons, which is so prominent in 2 Pet. iii. Each of the seasons named has had its counterpart, we may well believe, embracing many centuries of the world's history.

(36) **Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.**—As before we traced a kind of echo of the parable of the Talents, so here we recognise something like a fragmentary reminiscence of that of the Wise and Foolish Virgins.

(37) **Watch.**—The impression which this command made on the hearts of Christians, is seen in a striking manner in the use of such names as Gregory, Vigilius, and the like.

### XIV.

(1, 2) **After two days was the feast of the passover.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 1—5. Better, *was the passover, and the feast of unleavened bread.* The latter designation is common to St. Mark and St. Luke, as an explanation intended for Gentile readers. The same fact accounts, perhaps, for the omission by both of the name of Caiaphas as the chief mover in the scheme.

(3—9) **And being in Bethany.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 6—13.

**Ointment of spikenard.**—The Greek word so translated is, as the various renderings in the margin show, of doubtful import. It is used by St. John (xii. 3) in his account of the same facts.

**She brake the box.**—As in the "breaking through" the roof in Mark ii. 4, the vivid touch that brings the manner of the act distinctly before our eyes is found in St. Mark only. The Greek word implies not so much the breaking of the neck of the costly jar or flask, but the crushing it in its entirety with both her hands.

(4) **There were some that had indignation.**—Note St. Mark's limitation of the murmurers to "some," as an intermediate stage between St. Matthew's "the disciples" and St. John's naming "Judas."

ment made? (5) for it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence,[1] and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her. (6) And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. (7) For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. (8) She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. (9) Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, *this* also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

(10) And Judas Iscariot,[a] one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them. (11) And when they heard *it,* they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

(12) And the first day of unleavened bread,[b] when they killed[2] the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover? (13) And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. (14) And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? (15) And he will shew you a large upper room furnished *and* prepared: there make ready for us. (16) And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover. (17) And in the evening he cometh with the twelve. (18) And as they sat and did eat,[c] Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me. (19) And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, *Is* it I? and another *said, Is* it I? (20) And he answered and said unto them, *It is* one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish. (21) The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.

(22) And as they did eat,[d] Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake *it,* and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. (23) And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave *it* to them: and they all drank of it. (24) And he said unto them, This is my

[1] See Matt. 18. 28.

[c] Matt. 26. 20.

[a] Matt. 26. 14.

[b] Matt. 26. 17.

[2] Or, *sacrificed.*

[d] Matt. 26. 26.

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(5) **For more than three hundred pence.**—The specific mention of the sum, not given by St. Matthew, is one of the few points common to St. Mark and St. John (xii. 5).

(6) **She hath wrought a good work on me.**—"Good" in the sense of "noble," as implying the higher form of goodness. The use of the word here is peculiar to St. Mark.

(7) **Whensoever ye will ye may do them good.**—Peculiar to St. Mark; the other words being given by him in common with St. Matthew and St. John.

(10, 11) **And Judas Iscariot.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 14, 15.

(11) **They were glad, and promised to give him money.**—It may be noted (1) that the mention of the priests being "glad" is in common with St. Luke, and (2) that St. Mark does not name the specific sum which was promised as the price of blood.

(12–21) **And the first day of unleavened bread.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 20—25.

**When they killed the passover.**—Better, *when they used to sacrifice;* the Greek tense implying a custom. Here, again, both St. Mark and St. Luke write as explaining the custom for their Gentile readers.

(13) **And he sendeth forth two of his disciples.**—The number is given by St. Mark; the names, Peter and John, by St. Luke only. The sign of the pitcher of water is common to both Gospels, but not to St. Matthew.

(14) **The goodman of the house.**—Better, *the master.* The better MSS. give the reading, "Where is *my* guest-chamber," a form which implies discipleship on the part of the owner of the house, even more than that given by St. Matthew. The word translated "guest-chamber" is the same as that which appears in Luke ii. 7 as "inn." It was, in fact, the generic term for a hired lodging.

(15) **Furnished and prepared.**—The first word implied that it was not a bare, empty chamber, but set out with cushions or *divans,* on which the guests could recline; the second, that it was specially arranged for the Paschal Supper of that evening.

(18) **As they sat.**—Better, *as they reclined.*

(21) **Good were it for that man.**—St. Mark, it will be noted, omits the fact recorded by St. Matthew, that the last "Is it I?" was uttered by the Traitor.

(22–25) **As they did eat.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 26—29.

**Take, eat.**—The latter word is wanting in many of the best MSS.

(23) **When he had given thanks.**—St. Mark agrees with St. Matthew in using the word "blessing" of the bread, and "giving thanks" of the cup. St. Luke uses the latter word of the bread, and implies by the word "likewise" that the form was repeated with the cup.

(24) **Which is shed for many.**—Better, *is being shed,* the participle, both here and in St. Matthew, being in the present tense.

blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. (25) Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

(26) And when they had sung an hymn,[1] they went out into the mount of Olives. (27) And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night:[a] for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. (28) But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee. (29) But Peter said unto him,[b] Although all shall be offended, yet *will* not I. (30) And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, *even* in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. (31) But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all. (32) And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane:[c] and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray. (33) And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; (34) and saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch. (35) And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. (36) And he said, Abba, Father, all things *are* possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt. (37) And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour? (38) Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly *is* ready, but the flesh *is* weak. (39) And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words. (40) And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they what to answer him. (41) And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. (42) Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

(43) And immediately,[d] while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. (44) And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead *him* away safely. (45) And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master; and kissed him.

(46) And they laid their hands on him, and took him. (47) And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off

[1] Or, *psalm.*

[a] Matt. 26. 31.

[b] Matt. 26. 33.

[d] Matt. 26. 47.

[c] Matt 26. 36.

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(25) **Of the fruit of the vine.**—Better, *of the product.* Note the difference between "the kingdom of God" here, and "the kingdom of My Father" in Matt. xxvi. 29.

(26–42) **And when they had sung an hymn.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 30—46.

(30) **Before the cock crow twice.**—The word "twice" is omitted in many MSS. It agrees, however, with the emphatic mention of the cock crowing a "second time" in verse 71, and with the form of the prediction in verse 72, and may fairly be regarded as the true reading, the omission in some MSS. being accidental.

(31) **He spake the more vehemently.**—The Greek tense implies frequent and continuous speaking.

(32) **While I shall pray.**—Literally, *till I shall have prayed.*

(33) **Began to be sore amazed.**—Note St. Mark's use of the stronger word as compared with St. Matthew's "to be sorrowful."

(36) **And he said, Abba, Father.**—The record of the word "Abba" as actually uttered, is peculiar to St. Mark. We, perhaps, find traces of the impression it made on the minds of men in the "Abba, Father" of Rom. viii. 15, Gal. iv. 6.

(37) **Simon, sleepest thou?**—Note that while St. Matthew and St. Luke give the question in the plural, St. Mark reports it in the singular, and joins it with the emphatic utterance of the name of the disciple. His report, too, includes the two questions which appear separately in the other two Gospels.

(41) **And he cometh the third time.**—We may note St. Mark's omission of the third repetition of the prayer.

**It is enough.**—Peculiar to St. Mark, and probably noting the transition from the half-reproachful permission, "Sleep on now, and take your rest," to the emphatic and, as it were, startled exclamation, "the hour is come."

**Is betrayed.**—The tense, as in St. Matthew, is present, "is at this moment being betrayed."

(43–45) **And immediately, while he yet spake.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 47—50. Note the re-appearance of St. Mark's characteristic "immediately." Many of the better MSS. add the distinguishing "Iscariot" to the name of Judas.

(44) **Take him.**—Better, *seize.*

(45) **Master, master.**—Better, *Rabbi, Rabbi.* All the MSS. give the Hebrew word, and not its Greek equivalent.

(46–50) **Took him.**—Better, as before, *seized.* See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 51—56.

his ear. (48) And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and *with* staves to take me? (49) I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled. (50) And they all forsook him, and fled. (51) And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about *his* naked *body;* and the young men laid hold on him: (52) and he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.

(53) And they led Jesus away to the high priest:[a] and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. (54) And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire. (55) And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death;[b] and found none. (56) For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together. (57) And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, (58) We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. (59) But neither so did their witness agree together. (60) And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against thee? (61) But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked

[a] Matt. 26. 57.

[b] Matt. 26. 59.

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(48) **As against a thief.**—Better, *as against a robber*, the word implying the bolder form of theft.

(49) **Ye took me not.**—Better, *ye seized Me not*, or, *ye laid no hold on Me.*

(51) **And there followed him a certain young man.**—The remarkable incident that follows is narrated by St. Mark only. It had clearly made a deep impression on the minds of some of the disciples (probably enough, on that of Peter), from whom, directly or indirectly, the report came. Who it was that appeared in this strange fashion we are left to conjecture. Some have supposed that it was St. Mark himself, but for this there is obviously no ground but the fact that this Evangelist alone records it. A careful examination of the facts suggests another conclusion as probable. (1) The man was "young," and the self-same term is applied to the ruler who had great possessions (Matt. xix. 20). (2) He had apparently been sleeping, or, it may be, watching, not far from Gethsemane, with the linen sheet wrapped round him, and had been roused by the approach of the officers and the crowd. This suggests one who lived somewhere on the Mount of Olives, and so far points to Lazarus or Simon of Bethany, as the only two conspicuous disciples in that neighbourhood. (3) He was one who so loved our Lord that he went on following Him when all the disciples forsook Him and fled, and this also was what might be expected from Lazarus. On the supposition suggested in (1), he was now obeying almost literally the command, "Take up thy cross, and follow Me." (See Notes on Matt. xix. 16—22.) (4) He was one whom the officers (the words "the young men" are omitted in the better MSS.) were eager to seize, when they allowed all the disciples to go their way, and this agrees with the command which had been given by the priests, that they should take and kill Lazarus also (John xii. 10). (5) As the "linen sheet" or *sindôn* (see Note on Matt. xxvii. 59) was especially used for the burial of the dead, it is conceivable, on this supposition, that what had been the winding-sheet of the dead Lazarus had been kept and used by him in memory of his resurrection. (6) On the hypothesis thus suggested, the suppression of the name stands on the same footing as that of the name of the sister of Lazarus, who poured the precious ointment on our Lord's head at Bethany (Matt. xxvi. 7, Mark xiv. 3), whom the Evangelists must have known, but whom they mention simply as a "woman." Their lips were sealed as to the family of Bethany until the circumstances, whatever they may have been, that called for silence had passed away. It is obvious that so far as this identity is established it suggests many thoughts of profound interest. What had seemed impossible to men had proved possible with God. He who had gone away sorrowful because he had great possessions, had given freely to the poor (see Notes on Matt. xxvi. 6, 9), and had proved more faithful than the Twelve, and so the last had become the first.

(53—65) **And they led Jesus away.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 57—66.

(54) **Sat . . . and warmed himself.**—Better, *was sitting and warming himself.*

**With the servants.**—Better, *with the officers.*

**At the fire.**—Literally, *at the light;* the word bringing out very vividly the effect of the glare of the charcoal fire on St. Peter's face.

(56) **Their witness agreed not together.**—St. Mark gives what St. Matthew only implies as the cause of the failure.

(57) **There arose certain.**—St. Mark is here less definite than St. Matthew, who, writing for Jews, was apparently anxious to show that the rule which required "two or three witnesses" in support of a criminal charge had barely been complied with.

(58) **This temple.**—The word here, as in Matt. xxvi. 61 and John ii. 19, is that which indicates generally the sanctuary or shrine, and here the "Holy Place" of the Temple.

**Made with hands . . . made without hands.**—The antithesis is peculiar to St. Mark, but we may, perhaps, trace an echo of it in the "more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands," of Heb. ix. 11.

(59) **Neither so did their witness agree together.**—This, again, is peculiar to St. Mark. We are not told in what respects their evidence failed to agree; possibly in details of time and place, possibly in the absence or presence of the words reported in the previous verse.

(61) **The Son of the Blessed.**—In St. Matthew and St. Luke we have simply "the Son of God;" but the use of "the Blessed" as a name of God in doxologies and other solemn formulæ was a common practice.

him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? (62) And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power,[a] and coming in the clouds of heaven. (63) Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? (64) Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death. (65) And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophesy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

(66) And as Peter was beneath in the palace,[b] there cometh one of the maids of the high priest: (67) and when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. (68) But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew. (69) And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is *one* of them. (70) And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art *one* of them: for thou art a Galilæan, and thy speech agreeth *thereto.* (71) But he began to curse and to swear, *saying,* I know not this man of whom ye speak. (72) And the second time the cock crew.[c] And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.[1]

CHAPTER XV.—(1) And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council,[d] and bound Jesus, and carried *him* away, and delivered *him* to Pilate. (2) And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest *it.* (3) And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing. (4) And Pilate asked him again,[e] saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee. (5) But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled. (6) Now at *that* feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired. (7) And there was *one* named Barabbas, *which lay* bound with

[a] Matt. 24. 30.
[c] Matt. 26. 75.

[1] Or, *he wept abundantly,* or, *he began to weep.*

A.D. 33.

[d] Matt. 27. 1.

[b] Matt. 26. 69.

[e] Matt. 27. 13.

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(63) **Then the high priest rent his clothes.**—It is noticeable that St. Mark uses the word for the inner garment, St. Matthew that for the outer.

(64) **Guilty of death.**—Here, as in Matt. xxvi. 66, the translators follow the old English usage, and connect the word "guilty," not as we now do, with the crime of which a man is convicted, but with the punishment to which he is liable.

(65) **And to cover his face.**—It was this (recorded by St. Mark and St. Luke, but not by St. Matthew) which gave point to the taunt "Prophesy." They blindfolded the Prophet, and then called on Him to use His power of supernatural vision.

**The servants did strike him.**—Better, as before, *the officers.* The two forms of outrage, with the clenched fist and with the open palm, are specified by both St. Matthew and St. Mark.

(66) **And as Peter was beneath.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 69—75.

(67) **Thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.**—The order of the words varies in the MSS.; but the better ones give the words as spoken with an emphatic scorn, "And thou also wast with the Nazarene, Jesus."

(68) **And he went out into the porch.**—The noun is not the same as that used by St. Matthew, but signifies literally "the space before the palace," *i.e.,* the vestibule. Substantially, of course, it comes to much the same meaning.

(69) **A maid.**—Better, *the maid—i.e.,* the one that had pointed him out before.

(70) **And thy speech agreeth thereto.**—Singularly enough, the words, which seem so natural, are wanting in many of the best MSS., and may, therefore, possibly have been an interpretative addition, possibly made by St. Mark himself, in what we may call a revised edition of his Gospel.

(72) **When he thought thereon.**—The Greek word is a somewhat peculiar one, and means literally "throwing at," or "on." The English version assumes that it means "casting his mind or thoughts," just as "to reflect" is "to bend the mind," and is probably right. The marginal readings give two conjectures. Yet another may be found in the idea that the word describes St. Peter's action "casting himself down, he wept," but there is not enough authority for any other interpretation to justify a change in the text.

### XV.

(1–14) **And the whole council.**—The words in the Greek are in apposition with "the chief priests." We do not know of any other elements in the Council or Sanhedrin than the priests, scribes, and elders, and it is possible that the writer may have added the words in the sense of "even the whole Council," as giving the collective word for the body of which the three constituent parts had been already named. On the whole section see Notes on Matt. xxvii. 1—2, 11—23.

(3) **But he answered nothing.**—Many MSS. omit these words, but the fact is implied in Pilate's question, and in "Jesus yet answered nothing," in verse 5.

(6) **He released . . . whomsoever they desired.**—Both verbs are in the tense which implies custom.

(7) **Bound with them that had made insurrection.**—The fact that Barabbas was a rebel as well as

them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection. (8) And the multitude crying aloud began to desire *him to do* as he had ever done unto them. (9) But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews? (10) For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy. (11) But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them. (12) And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do *unto him* whom ye call the King of the Jews? (13) And they cried out again, Crucify him. (14) Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

(15) And *so* Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged *him*, to be crucified. (16) And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Prætorium; and they call together the whole band. (17) And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his *head*, (18) and began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews! (19) And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing *their* knees worshipped him. (20) And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him. (21) And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian,[a] who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross. (22) And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull. (23) And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received *it* not. (24) And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take. (25) And it was the third hour, and they crucified him. (26) And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS. (27) And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on

[a] Matt. 27. 32.

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robber is stated by St. Luke also (xxiii. 19), but St. Mark alone records the fact that his fellow-insurgents were imprisoned with him.

(8) **As he had ever done unto them.**—More accurately, *as he ever used to do unto them.*

(9) **Will ye that I release unto you . . ?**—The form of the question in the Greek implies (as the like form in John xviii. 39) a half hope of an affirmative answer.

(12) **Whom ye call the King of the Jews.**—We note in St. Mark's report something of the same determination to fasten upon the Jews the reproach that it was indeed their king whom he had condemned, as we see afterwards in the "title" which he placed upon the cross, and in his refusal to alter it (John xix. 21, 22).

(15—21) **And so Pilate, willing to content the people.**—The word which St. Mark uses for "content" appears to be the Greek equivalent for the Latin *satisfacere,* and so takes its place in the evidence for St. Mark's connection with Rome and the Roman Church.

**Scourged him.**—The word, like that in St. Matthew, is formed from the Latin *flagellum,* and forms another link in the chain of evidence just referred to.

(16) **Into the hall, called Prætorium.**—The same word is used by St. Matthew (xxvii. 27), but is there translated the "common hall." See Note there as to the meaning of the word. Here, again, we have a Latin word.

(17) **They clothed him with purple.**—The colour is called "purple" by St. Mark and St. John, "crimson" by St. Matthew. The two words probably indicated the same colour.

(19) **They smote . . did spit . . worshipped.**—All three verbs are in the tense which implies frequent repetition.

(21) **The father of Alexander and Rufus.**—The fact recorded here, and not elsewhere, is one of the most striking instances of the independent character of St. Mark's Gospel. It is clear that it had a special interest for himself and the readers for whom he wrote; what that interest was we can only conjecture. The two names were so common that we cannot arrive at more than a probable identification, but the mention of a "Rufus chosen in the Lord" as prominent among the Christians of Rome (Rom. xvi. 13), taken together with the evidence which connects St. Mark's Gospel with that Church (see *Introduction*), tends to the conclusion that he was one of the two brothers thus mentioned. But if so, then we are led on to some other facts of no slight interest. St. Paul speaks of the mother of Rufus as being also his mother—*i.e.*, endeared to him by many proofs of maternal kindness—and so we are led to the belief that the wife of Simon of Cyrene must, at some time or other, at Antioch or Corinth, and afterwards at Rome, have come within the inner circle of St. Paul's friends. This, in its turn, connects itself with the prominence given to "men of Cyrene" in St. Luke's account of the foundation of the Gentile Church of Antioch (Acts xi. 20). (See Note on Matt. xxvii. 20.)

(21—38) See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 32—51.

(23) **Wine mingled with myrrh.**—Note this description as in part explaining St. Matthew's "wine mingled with gall."

(25) **It was the third hour.**—The precise statement of the hour is peculiar to St. Mark, but it agrees with the narrative common to him with St. Matthew and St. Luke of the darkness that came over the land at the "sixth hour."

(26) **The King of the Jews.**—St. Mark gives the shortest form of the inscription.

(27) **Two thieves.**—Better, as in Matt. xxvii. 38, *two robbers.*

his left. (28) And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.[a] (29) And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, (30) save thyself, and come down from the cross. (31) Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save. (32) Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him. (33) And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. (34) And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?[b] which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (35) And some of them that stood by, when they heard *it*, said, Behold, he calleth Elias. (36) And one ran and filled a spunge full of vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down. (37) And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. (38) And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

(39) And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God. (40) There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; (41) (who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him,[c] and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.

(42) And now when the even was come,[d] because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, (43) Joseph of Arimathæa, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. (44) And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling *unto him* the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. (45) And when he knew *it* of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. (46) And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre. (47) And Mary Magdalene and Mary *the mother* of Joses beheld where he was laid.

a Isa. 53. 12.

b Matt. 27. 46.

c Luke 8. 3.

d Matt. 27. 57.

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(28) **And the scripture was fulfilled.**—The verse, if genuine, would be noticeable as one of the few instances in which St. Mark dwells on the fulfilment of prophecy; but it is omitted by nearly all the better MSS., and probably originated in a marginal note, calling attention to the fulfilment of the prophecy which we find quoted by our Lord as about to be fulfilled in Luke xxii. 37.

(29) **Ah.**—The interjection, which in its Greek form expresses a kind of inarticulate scorn, is peculiar to St. Mark, and may be noted as another instance of his habit of reproducing the very sounds that had been uttered.

(30) **Save thyself.**—The order of the clauses should be inverted, *come down from the cross, and save Thyself.*

(32) **Let Christ.**—Better, *the Christ.* The article is emphatic, and the word had not yet come to be used only as a name.

(34) **Eloi, Eloi.**—Here, again, the form which St. Mark gives is a closer reproduction of the very sounds of the Aramaic form of the word than that in St. Matthew, who gives the Hebrew as it stands in Ps. xxii. 1.

(39) **When the centurion.**—St. Mark, after his manner, uses the actual Latin word, St. Matthew the Greek equivalent.

(39—47) See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 54—61.

(40) **Among whom was Mary Magdalene.**—The list is the same as that in Matt. xxvii. 56, with the exceptions (1) of the epithet "less," or better, *little*, as applied to James, and (2) the name of Salome instead of "the mother of Zebedee's children."

(42) **The preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath.**—The explanation, like that in chap. vii. 2, 3, is characteristic of St. Mark, as writing for Gentile readers. It fixes, with hardly the shadow of a doubt, the meaning of the word "preparation," as given in the Note on Matt. xxvii. 62.

(43) **Joseph of Arimathæa.**—The account given of him is fuller than in St. Matthew. The phrase, "which also waited for the kingdom of God," has its parallel in Luke xxiii. 51.

**Went in boldly.**—Better, *waxed bold, and went in.* There is an implied contrast between his boldness now and his previous timidity.

(44) **And Pilate marvelled.**—The wonder of Pilate, and his calling the centurion (the article points to his being the same that had been mentioned in verse 39), are peculiar to St. Mark.

(46) **He bought fine linen.**—Better, *a fine linen sheet.* The word is the same as in Matt. xxvii. 59. The fact that it was bought just before the Sabbath began is peculiar to St. Mark.

(47) **Mary the mother of Joses.**—In Matt. xxvii. 61 she is described simply as "the other Mary."

CHAPTER XVI.—(1) And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the *mother* of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. (2) And very early in the morning the first *day* of the week,[a] they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. (3) And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? (4) And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. (5) And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment;[b] and they were affrighted. (6) And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. (7) But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.[c] (8) And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any *man;* for they were afraid.

(9) Now when *Jesus* was risen early the first *day* of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene,[d] out of whom he had cast seven devils.[e] (10) *And* she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. (11) And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

(12) After that he appeared in another form unto two of them,[f] as they walked,

A.D. 33.

[a] Luke 24. 1; John 20. 1.

[b] John 20. 11.

[c] Matt. 26. 32.

[d] John 20. 14.

[e] Luke 8. 2.

[f] Luke 24. 13.

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XVI.

(1—8) **And when the sabbath was past.**—See Notes on Matt. xxviii. 1—8. "Mary the mother of James" (not, as in chap. xv. 40, of "James and Joses") answers, as before, to the "other Mary" of Matt. xxviii. 1. "Salome" appears, as before, in St. Mark only.

(2) **At the rising of the sun.**—Literally, *when the sun had risen.* There seems at first a slight discrepancy between this and St. Matthew's "while it was yet dark." A morning haze, however, or the partial continuance of the gloom which had shrouded the city on the previous day, may well be thought of as harmonizing the two accounts.

(3) **And they said among themselves . . .**—Literally, *and they were saying to themselves.* The words were on the point of rising to their lips as they looked up and saw the stone rolled away.

(4) **For it was very great.**—The words have been explained as giving the reason for their previous question, but it seems more natural to see in them St. Mark's explanation of his having used the word "rolled away" instead of saying, simply, "taken away" or "removed."

(5) **A young man sitting on the right side.**—So St. Mark describes the form which St. Matthew (xxviii. 1) simply calls an "angel of the Lord."

(6) **Be not affrighted.**—The words agree substantially with those in Matt. xxviii. 5—8, but omit the fuller appeal to the women to remember the words which their Lord had spoken while He was yet with them in Galilee.

(8) **They trembled and were amazed.**—Literally, *trembling and amazement seized them.*

(9—20) **Now when Jesus was risen early.**—See Notes on Matt. xxviii. 16—20. The history of the verses that follow is in every way remarkable. They are not found in two of the oldest MSS.—the Sinaitic and the Vatican—are marked as doubtful in many others, and are wanting in some versions. In some of these (*e.g.,* in the Vatican MS.) there is a blank space left between verse 8 and the beginning of St. Luke, as though the writer had suspended his work and waited for materials. The absence was noticed by Jerome, who says that "nearly all the Greek texts omit them." Eusebius states the same fact as true of "the correct MSS.;" and no reference is made to them in the tables of parallel passages which were constructed for reference by Eusebius and Ammonius. On the other hand, they are referred to by Irenæus (about A.D. 170), and are found in the Alexandrian and Cambridge MSS., and in twelve other uncials which are nearly (some say, quite) as old as the two which omit them. When we turn to the internal evidence we find that the narrative, which up to this point had followed closely in the footsteps of St. Matthew, now becomes a very condensed epitome of St. John's record of our Lord's appearance to Mary Magdalene (xx. 11—18), of St. Luke's account of the journey to Emmaus (xxiv. 13—35), of the appearance to the ten disciples in John xx. 19—25 and Luke xxiv. 36—43, of the mission of the eleven reported in Matt. xxviii. 16—20, of the Ascension as given by Luke xxiv. 50—53. Two explanations of these facts are possible. (1) We may suppose that the writer of the Gospel wrote two copies of it, leaving one unfinished, ending at verse 8; that this passed into the hands of persons by whom it was copied as complete, and so became the archetype of the MSS. in which the verses are wanting; while those that contain the subsequent verses were made from a more perfect text, written by St. Mark himself. (2) That the Gospel, having been originally completed by the writer, was in some way, by accident or design, mutilated; that as such it was reproduced faithfully by some transcribers, while others thought it better to give it a completion of some kind, by condensing what they found in the other Gospels. Of the two hypotheses the latter seems the more probable. It seems better, looking to these facts, to reserve notes, for the most part, for the Gospels in which the narratives appear in what was probably their original and certainly their fuller form.

(9—11) **First to Mary Magdalene.**—See Notes on John xx. 11—18, but note that St. Mark's account of her as one from whom Jesus "had cast out seven devils" is not from St. John, but from Luke viii. 2.

(12—13) **After that he appeared in another form.**—See Notes on Luke xxiv. 13—35.

and went into the country. (13) And they went and told *it* unto the residue: neither believed they them.

(14) Afterward he appeared unto the eleven[a] as they sat at meat,[1] and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. (15) And he said unto them,[b] Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. (16) He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.[c] (17) And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils;[d] they shall speak with new tongues;[e] (18) they shall take up serpents;[f] and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick,[g] and they shall recover.

(19) So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven,[h] and sat on the right hand of God. (20) And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following.[i] Amen.

[d] Acts 16. 18.
[e] Acts 2. 4.
[f] Acts 28. 5.
[a] Luke 24. 36; John 20. 19.
[1] Or, *together*.
[g] Acts 28. 8.
[b] Matt. 28. 19.
[h] Luke 24. 51.
[c] John 12. 48.
[i] Heb. 2. 4.

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(14) **Afterward he appeared unto the eleven.**—See Notes on Luke xxiv. 36—43.

(15) **And he said unto them.**—See Notes on Matt. xxviii. 16—20. There is much, however, that is so distinct in St. Mark's report as to suggest the thought that it may have referred to a different occasion.

**Preach the gospel to every creature.**—Better, *to the whole creation.* The universality of the word is, of course, limited by the nature of the case.

(16) **He that believeth not shall be damned.**—Better, *shall be condemned.* The Greek word does not necessarily imply the idea of irreversible endless condemnation which has come to be attached to the English one.

(17) **They shall speak with new tongues.**—This is noticeable as being the only distinct reference in the Gospels to the form of the Pentecostal gift. The promise of the Spirit itself had been prominent, however, throughout our Lord's teaching (Luke xi. 13; John xiv. 17, 26), and appears from Acts i. 8 to have been specially renewed between the Resurrection and Ascension. On the nature of the gift itself, see Notes on Acts ii. 4; x. 46; xix. 6; 1 Cor. xii. 10; xiv. 4—26.

(18) **They shall take up serpents.**—The instance of St. Paul at Melita is the only recorded example of the kind (Acts xxviii. 1—6). Power over "serpents and scorpions" had, it will be remembered, been given before (Luke x. 19).

**If they drink any deadly thing . . .**—Of this there is no recorded instance in the New Testament, but it finds an illustration in the tradition of the poisoned cup which was offered to St. John.

(19—20) **So then after the Lord had spoken.**—See Note on Luke xxiv. 53. St. Matthew, it will be remembered, gives no account of the Ascension. (See Note on Matt. xxviii. 20.) St. Mark and St. Luke record it briefly. St. John implies it in his report of our Lord's words (vi. 62; xx. 17). In Acts i. 3—11 it is narrated with greater fulness.

The form of the last two verses, the use of the "Lord" instead of Jesus, suggests the thought of their being a later addition to the original records of our Lord's life and teaching. (See Note on Luke vii. 13.)

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE.

# INTRODUCTION

TO

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE.

I. **The writer.**—But one person bearing the name of Luke, or, in its Greek form, Lucas, appears in the New Testament; and of him the direct notices are few and meagre. He is named as being with St. Paul during his first imprisonment at Rome, and is described as "the beloved physician" (Col. iv. 14). He is still with him, stress being laid on his being the only friend who remained, when the Apostle's work was drawing to its close (2 Tim. iv. 11). Beyond these facts all is inference or conjecture. Both conjecture and inference are, however, in this case, full of interest, present many unexpected coincidences, and, by the convergence of many different lines of circumstantial evidence, raise the probabilities which attach to each taken separately into something not far from certainty as to their collective result.

The name itself is suggestive. It does not appear as such in any classical writer, or on any Greek or Latin inscription. Its form, however, shows that it is a contraction from Lucanus, as Apollos is from Apollonius, or Silas from Silvanus, and not, as some have thought, another form of Lucius.* This name, again in its turn, was not a common one, and we naturally ask what associations were connected with it. Its most probable etymology points to its being derived from the region of southern Italy known as Lucania. Lucas, or Lucanus, would be a natural name for a slave or freedman, having no family name as his own, who had come, or whose father had come, from that region. Assuming, for the present. St. Luke's authorship of the Acts, we find in the supposition that this was the origin of his name an explanation of the obvious familiarity with Italian topography shown in his mention of Puteoli, Appii Forum, and the Three Taverns, in Acts xxviii. 13—15. The name Lucanus, was, however, borne at this time by a writer, M. Annæus Lucanus, who stands high in the list of Latin poets, as the author of the *Pharsalia*, an epic which takes as its subject the great struggle for power between Julius Cæsar and Pompeius. As he was born, not in Italy, but in Spain (at Corduba, the modern *Cordova*), the name with him must have had another than a local significance. Was there any link of association connecting the two men who bore a name which was, as we have seen, far from a common one? We are here in a region of conjecture; but on the assumption that there was some such link, we have a probable explanation (1) of the favour shown to St. Luke's friend and companion, the great Apostle of the Gentiles, by the uncle of the poet, J. Annæus Gallio, the Proconsul of Achaia (Acts xviii. 14—17), and (2) of the early tradition of a friendship between St. Paul and another uncle, the Stoic philosopher, Seneca, issuing in the correspondence of fourteen letters, which, in the time of Jerome (*de Vir. Illust.* c. 12) and Augustine (*Epist.* cliii. 14), was read with interest, and often quoted as a fragment of Apostolic literature. The letters that are now extant under that name are, in the judgment of well nigh all critics, spurious; but the fact that a writer in the third or fourth century thought it worth while to compose such a correspondence, implies that he was able to take for granted a general belief in the friendship which it pre-supposes; and the many coincidences of thought and language between the Apostle and the Philosopher (as seen, *e.g.*, in the "Essay on St. Paul and Seneca," in Dr. Lightfoot's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians*) are at least striking enough to suggest, if not intercourse, at least some derivation from a common source. Seneca was, it must be remembered, officially connected with the Court of Nero during St. Paul's imprisonment; and when the fame of the prisoner and of his doctrine was spread through the whole Prætorium (Phil. i. 13), and congregations of disciples were to be found even among the slaves of the Imperial household (Phil. iv. 22), it was not likely that a man in his position should remain ignorant of the teacher whose influence was spreading so widely. If the friend and companion of the prisoner bore the same name as the nephew of the philosopher, that coincidence would help to attract attention. If, as the coincidence itself suggests, there had been any previous connection between the two, we have an hypothesis into which all the facts of the case fit in with an almost surprising symmetry. The poet Lucan, we may note, was born A.D. 39. The date of St. Luke's birth we have no materials for fixing, but the impression left by the facts of the case is that he was about the same age as St. Paul,† and therefore older than the poet by thirty or forty years. Was the one named after the other? And does this imply a connection of the whole family with the beloved physician? This, it is obvious, would give an additional support to the superstructure of inferences already raised.‡

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* It follows from this that the Evangelist cannot be identified, as some have thought, with Lucius of Cyrene, who is mentioned as prominent among the prophets and teachers at Antioch (Acts xiii. 1), or the Lucius who is named as a kinsman of St. Paul's (Rom. xvi. 21). If that identification had been possible, the traditional fame of Cyrene for its School of Medicine (Herod. iii. 131), would have had a special interest in connection with St. Luke's calling.

† St. Paul, *e.g.*, never speaks of him as he does of younger disciples, like Timothy or Titus, as his "child," or "son, in the faith."

‡ Lucan, as has been said above, was born at Cordova. Now, it is remarkable that when St. Paul was planning an extended journey with St. Luke as his companion, Spain, and not Rome, was to be its ultimate goal (Rom. xv. 28). That country had a large element of Jews in its population in the third and fourth centuries, and it is probable that they had settled there, as in Cyrene and Carthage, from an early period of the Dispersion. Cordova, as one of the chief seats of Roman culture, was certain to attract them, and we find it at a later period one of the chief seats of mediæval Rabbinism, with a

The incidental mention of St. Luke's name in Col. iv. 14, places us on more solid ground. He is emphatically distinguished from "those of the circumcision"—Mark and others who are named in Col. iv. 10, 11. He was, *i.e.*, a Gentile by birth, and this fact, it is obvious, is important on all the questions affecting his relations with the Apostle of the Gentiles, and the aim and characteristic features of his writings.

The fact that he was "a physician" suggests other inferences. That profession in the early days of the Empire was filled almost exclusively by freedmen, or the sons of freedmen (the *Libertini* of Acts vi. 9), who, shut out more or less completely from military or official life, were led to devote themselves to science, or art, or literature. The well-known list of the members of the household of the Empress Livia, the wife of Augustus, compiled from the *Columbarium*,* a sepulchre which was opened at Rome in A.D. 1726, presents many examples of names with the word *medicus* attached to them; among them may be noted that of Tyrannus, the name which appears in Acts xix. 9 as the owner of the "school" or lecture-room at Ephesus, in which St. Paul received his disciples. Where, we ask, was one who made choice of that profession likely to seek for his education? The answer to that question leads us into yet a new region of coincidences. On the one hand, the town of Crotona, in Southern Italy, had a reputation of some centuries standing for its School of Medicine (Herod. iii. 131), and this would fall in with the hypothesis of the Evangelist's Lucanian origin. On the other, of all the medical schools of the time, there were none that stood higher in reputation than that of Tarsus, and few that stood so high. The leading physicians of the time, Aretæus the Cappadocian, Dioscorides of Anazarba in Cilicia, Athenæus of the Cilician Attaleia, could hardly have received their training elsewhere. Within a few miles of Tarsus, at Ægæ, on the coast of Cilicia, was a great Temple of Æsculapius, which, as resorted to by sick persons from all countries who came to consult the priests of the Temple (the Asclepiadæ, *i.e.*, the guild or brotherhood of Æsculapius), offered the nearest analogue to a modern hospital, as a place for observation and practice. If Tarsus were thus the place, or one of the places, to which Luke went to gain his professional knowledge and experience, we have again what explains many of the facts, more or less perplexing, in the Apostolic history. There is no record of St. Paul's first meeting with him, or of his conversion to the faith. If, with almost all interpreters of repute, we see in the sudden use of the first person plural in Acts xvi. 10 a proof of companionship then beginning between the writer of the book and the Apostle whose labours he narrates, the naturalness with which it comes in must be admitted as *primâ facie* evidence of previous acquaintance. But there were other names at that time connected with Tarsus which have an interest for the Christian student. All that we read in the Acts suggests the thought that the Cypriot Jew, the Levite, Joses Barnabas, the Son of Consolation, received his education at Tarsus, and there learnt to love and honour the tent-maker Rabbi, for the reality of whose conversion he was the first to vouch (Acts ix. 27), to whom he turned when his work pressed hard on him, as the fellow-labourer most like-minded with himself (Acts xi. 25), the separation from whom, when they parted, brought with it a bitterness which is hardly intelligible, except on the assumption of a previous affection that was now wounded to the quick (Acts xv. 39). Not altogether, again, without some points of contact with St. Luke, is the fact that the great geographer Strabo, a native of Cappadocia, whose full description of Tarsus (*Geogr.* xiii. p. 627) is obviously based upon personal observation, may have visited that city about A.D. 17, and on the supposition, either of actual contact, or of the attention called to his writings among the students of what we may well call the University of Tarsus, we may legitimately trace his influence as working indirectly in the uniform accuracy of all the incidental geographical notices that occur in St. Luke's Gospel and in the Acts. (See the Notes on those books.) At Tarsus also, at or about the same period, was to be seen another conspicuous character of the time, the great wonder-working impostor, Apollonius of Tyana, whose life was afterwards published as a counterfeit and rival parallel to that of Christ, and in whom St. Luke might have seen the great prototype of all the "workers with curious arts," with their books of charms and incantations, whom he describes as yielding to the mightier power of St. Paul (Acts xix. 11—12).

St. Luke's character as a physician may be considered from three distinct points of view, each of which has a special interest of its own. (1) As influencing his style and language; (2) as affecting his personal relations with St. Paul; and (3) as giving him opportunities for acquiring the knowledge which we find in the books commonly ascribed to him. Each of these call for a special, though brief, notice.

(1) The differences of style in St. Luke's Gospel as compared with the two that precede it, the proofs of a higher culture, the more rhythmical structure of his sentences, which are traceable even by the merely English reader, in such passages, *e.g.*, as chap. i. 1—4, are in the Greek original conspicuous throughout, the only exceptions being the portions of his Gospel which, like chaps. i., from verse 5, and ii., are apparently translations from a lost Hebrew or Aramaic document. The use of technical phraseology is, in like manner, traceable in his mention of the "fevers (the word is plural in the Greek), and dysentery," of which Publius was healed at Melita (Acts xxviii. 8); in the "feet" (not the common πόδες, *podes*, but the more precise βάσεις, *baseis*) "and ankle bones" of Acts iii. 7; in the "scales" that fell from St. Paul's eyes (Acts ix. 18); in the "trance," or, more literally, *ecstasy*, connected with St. Peter's vision (Acts x. 9, 10), as brought on by the Apostle's exposure to the noontide sun after long-continued fasting; in the special adjective used for "eaten of worms," in Acts xii. 23; in his notice of the "virtue," or healing power, that flowed forth from our Lord's body (Luke viii. 46); and of the sweat in "clots," or drops like as of blood, that issued from it in the Agony of Gethsemane (Luke xxii. 44).

(2) It is noticeable in tracing the connection of St. Paul and St. Luke, that on each occasion when the one joins the other for a time, it is after the Apostle had suffered in a more than common degree from the bodily infirmities that oppressed him. When they met at Troas, it was after he had been detained in Galatia by "the infirmity of his flesh" (Gal. iv. 13). When the

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fame already traditional. Another point of some interest still remains to be noticed. The poet was a fellow-pupil with Persius, under one of the great Stoic teachers of the time, L. Annæus Cornutus (the name is that of the *gens* of Seneca and Gallio), and Persius, as we have seen (Note on Mark vi.), had at least some points of contact with the Herods.

* The word means literally a "dove-cote," and was applied to the sepulchre as consisting mainly of what we should call "pigeon-holes," in each of which stood a small bin containing the ashes of the dead.

one joins the other in the voyage to Jerusalem, it is after St. Paul had had "the sentence of death" in himself, had been "dying daily," had been "delivered from so great a death," had been carrying about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus (2 Cor. i. 9; iv. 10—12, 16). From that time St. Luke seems scarcely to have left his friend, except, perhaps, for short intervals; and the way in which St. Paul speaks of him as "the beloved physician," makes it almost a matter of certainty that it was by his ministrations as a physician that he had made himself "beloved." The constant companionship of one with St. Luke's knowledge and special culture was sure, sooner or later, to affect St. Paul's thoughts and language, and traces of this influence are to be found in many of the Epistles. Most of these are naturally more manifest in the Greek than in the English words; but we may note as examples the frequent use of the ideal of "health" as the standard of life and teaching, as seen in the phrases "sound," or better, *healthy*, "doctrine" (ὑγιαινούσῃ) of 1 Tim. i. 10, vi. 3, 2 Tim. i. 13; and in the "doting," or better, *diseased* of 1 Tim. vi. 4; in the spread of error being like that of a gangrene or cancer (2 Tim. ii. 17); in the word for "puffed up," which implies the delirium of a fever of the typhus type (τυφωθεὶς, *typhôtheis*) in 1 Tim. iii. 6, vi. 4, 2 Tim. iii. 4; in the conscience seared, or better, *cauterised*, till it has become callous (1 Tim. iv. 2); in the malady of "itching ears" (2 Tim. iv. 3); in the "bodily exercise" or training (literally, the training of the gymnasium) that profiteth little (1 Tim. iv. 8); in the precept which enjoined on Timothy, as a means of keeping his mind in a state of equilibrium and purity, uncontaminated by the evil with which his office brought him into contact, to "drink no longer water" only, but "to use a little wine, for his stomach's sake and his often infirmities" (1 Tim. v. 23); in the judgment that a reckless disregard of the body is of no value as a remedy against what is technically called *fulness* (not "satisfying") of the flesh (Col. ii. 23). These words are, in almost all cases, characteristic of the Greek of Hippocrates and other medical writers, and the same may be said of the Greek words used by St. Paul for "dung" (σκύβαλα—*skybala*, Phil. iii. 8), for "occasion" (ἀφορμὴ—*aphormè*, 1 Tim. v. 14), for "gazing" or "looking earnestly" (ἀτενιζων, 2 Cor. iii. 7—13: the word is used twelve times by St. Luke, and by him only), for "charge" (1 Tim. i. 3, 18), for "contention" (*i.e., paroxysm*) in Acts xv. 39.

(3) It is obvious that in the East, then as now, the calling of a physician was a passport to many social regions into which it was otherwise difficult to find access. A physician of experience arriving in this or that city, would be likely to become acquainted, not with the poor only, but with men of official rank and women of the higher class. How far, and in what special way this helped St. Luke to obtain the information which he wanted for his Gospel, will call for inquiry further on. Here it will be enough to note that such channels of information were sure to be opened to him.

If, on the data that have been given, it is reasonable to suppose that St. Paul and St. Luke had met at Tarsus, it is almost a matter of certainty that their friendship was continued at Antioch. Here the tradition, given by Eusebius (*Hist.* iii. 4), that St. Luke was a resident in the latter city, agrees with the natural inference from the prominence which he gives to the Christian society there as the mother of all the Gentile churches (Acts xi. 19—30), from his knowledge of the names of its pastors and teachers (Acts xiii. 1—3), from the fulness with which he relates the early stages of the great controversy with the Judaisers (Acts xv. 1—3, 22—35). From Antioch, however, accepting as before the natural conclusion from the change of pronouns, he must have gone to Troas (Acts xvi. 10), and probably begun or continued there his labours in the gospel, which in a later time won St. Paul's glowing praise (2 Cor. viii. 18).* Thence he went with St. Paul to Philippi, and, as far as we can judge, remained there during the whole period of the Apostle's work at Corinth and Ephesus, the friend and guide of Lydia and Euodias, and Syntyche and other women who laboured with him in the gospel (Phil. iv. 2, 3), until after a visit to Corinth (2 Cor. viii. 18), he joined him again, and the Apostle returned from his winter sojourn in that city at Philippi, was with him once more at Troas, sailed with him to Miletus, and so to Tyre and Ptolemais and Cæsarea, went up with him to Jerusalem, and remained with him or near him during his two years' imprisonment under Felix or Festus (Acts xx.—xxvi.). Then came the voyage to Italy, narrated with the graphic precision of an eye-witness, and throughout in the first person plural (Acts xxvii. 1—44); then the shipwreck at Melita, and the arrival in Italy, and the two years (broken, perhaps, if we assume Luke, as seems probable, to be the "true yoke-fellow" of Phil. iv. 3, by a short visit to Philippi) of the first imprisonment at Rome (Col. iv. 14; Philem. verse 24). Then came the last unrecorded missionary journey of St. Paul in Spain, Asia, Macedonia, Achaia,† during which St. Luke probably continued with him; and then we find him, the last clear glimpse we get, still at the side of his friend and master, when all others were proving time-serving and faithless (2 Tim. iv. 10). Beyond this we have nothing definite. Tradition, not earlier than the fourth century (Epiphanius, *Hær.* 51), says that he preached in Italy, Gaul, Dalmatia, and Macedonia; that he was a painter as well as physician, and was specially famous for seven portraits of the Virgin; that he lived to the age of eighty-four; that he was crucified at Elæa on an olive tree, in the Peloponnesus; or, according to another story, died a natural death in Bithynia. His bones are related to have been brought to Constantinople from Patras in Achaia by order of the Emperor Constantine, and to have been deposited in the Church of the Apostles.

II. **The Authorship of the Gospel.**—The two earliest witnesses to the existence of a Gospel recognised as written by St. Luke, are (1) Irenæus, and (2) the Muratorian Fragment. (See *General Introduction on the Canon of the New Testament.*) The former, dwelling on the necessity of there being neither more nor less than four Gospels, as there are four elements, four cardinal points, and the like, acknowledges St. Luke's as one of the four. Pressing the analogy of the four symbolic figures of the Cherubim, he compares the Gospel which he names as Luke's to the calf, as representing the priestly, sacrificial side of our Lord's work. "As such," he says, "it began with Zacharias burning incense in the Temple" (*Adv. Hœr.* ii.). In another passage he speaks of "Luke, the companion of Paul," as having "written in a book the gospel which the latter preached" (*Adv. Hœr.* iii. 1). The *Muratorian Fragment*, which has suffered the loss of its first sentences, and so fails to give direct evidence as to St. Matthew and St. Mark, begins accordingly with St. Luke, mentioning, however, his Gospel as the third. What follows is interesting, though being, like the whole fragment, in the language of an obviously illiterate scribe, and presumably a translation from a Greek original, it is at once corrupt and obscure. The nearest approach to an intelligible rendering would be as follows:—"Luke the physician, after the ascension of Christ, when St. Paul had chosen him, as being zealous of what was just and right (*juris studiosus*), wrote in his own name, and as it seemed good to him (*ex opinione*, apparently with an implied reference to Luke i. 2). Yet he himself did not see the Lord in the flesh, and did what he did as he could best attain to it, and so he began his narrative from the birth of John." The passage is every way important, as showing (1) the early identification of the writer of the third Gospel with Luke the physician; (2) the absence of any early tradition that he was one of the Seventy; (3) the fact that the first two chapters were part of the Gospel as known to the writer of the Fragment, or of the still older document which he translated. Papias, as far as the fragments of his writings that remain show, who names St. Matthew and St. Mark, is silent as to St. Luke. Justin, who does not name the writer of any Gospel, speaks of the "records of the Apostles, which are called Gospels," as having been written either by Apostles themselves, or by those who followed them closely (using the same Greek word here as St. Luke uses in chap. i. 2), and cites in immediate connection with this the fact of the sweat that was as great drops of blood (*Dial. c. Tryph.* c. 22). It seems all but certain from this that he had read the narrative of Luke xxii. 44 as we have it, and that he ascribed the authorship of it to a companion of the Apostles. So Tertullian, who recognises four Gospels, and four only, speaks of "John and Matthew as Apostles, of Luke and Mark as helpers of the Apostles (*Cont. Marc.* iv. 2); and Origen (in Euseb. *Hist. Eccles.* vi. 25) speaks of the Gospel according to St. Luke as being "cited and approved by Paul," referring apparently to the expression "according to my Gospel" (Rom. ii. 16; xvi. 25; 2 Tim. i. 8), and to "the brother whose praise is in the Gospel," in 2 Cor. viii. 18, 19.

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* There are, it is believed, no sufficient reasons for rejecting the reference of this passage to St. Luke. It is not meant that St. Paul speaks of his gospel as a book, but the physician was an Evangelist in the primitive as well as the later sense of the word, and no one was so likely to have been chosen by St. Paul to be one of the representatives of the Macedonian churches.

† The route of the Apostle may be inferred partly from his plans (Phil. ii. 24; Philem. verse 22), partly from the reference to Asia in 2 Tim. i. 15, Macedonia (1 Tim. i. 3), Corinth (2 Tim. iv. 20). I have ventured to suggest Spain as also probable. It is hardly likely that St. Paul would have abandoned the strong desire which he expresses in Rom. xv. 24. And if there was, as has been shown to be probable, a personal connection between Luke and the family of Cordova, there would be fresh motives for his going there. Clement of Rome, it may be mentioned, speaks of him as having travelled to the furthest boundary of the West (*Epist. ad Cor.* c. 5), a phrase which would hardly have been used by a Roman writer of Rome itself. The tradition as to an evangelising journey into Spain became, as the years passed on, more and more definite, and was accepted by Epiphanius, Chrysostom, Jerome, and Theodoret.

III. **The sources of the Gospel.**—The question, Where did the writer of this Gospel collect his information, is obviously one of special interest. In St. Matthew we have, accepting the traditional authorship, personal recollection as a groundwork, helped by the oral or written teaching previously current in the Church. In St. Mark (see *Introduction* to that Gospel), we have substantially the same oral or written teaching, modified by the personal recollections of St. Peter. St. Luke, on the other hand, disclaims the character of an eye-witness (chap. i. 2), and confesses that he is only a compiler, claiming simply the credit of having done his best to verify the facts which he narrates. St. Paul, to whom he specially devoted himself, was, as far as personal knowledge went, in the same position as himself. Where, then, taking the facts of St. Luke's life, as given above, was it probable that he found his materials?

(1) At Antioch, if not before, the Evangelist would be likely to come in contact with not a few who had been "eye-witnesses and ministers of the word." Those who were scattered after the persecution that began with the death of Stephen (Acts xi. 19), and the prophets who came from Jerusalem with Agabus (Acts xi. 28), the latter probably forming part of the company of the Seventy (see Note on Luke x. 1), must have included some, at least, of persons so qualified. There, too, he must have met with Manaen, the foster-brother of the Tetrarch, and may have derived from him much that he narrates as to the ministry of the Baptist (iii. 1—20), our Lord's testimony to him (vii. 18—34), the relation between Herod and Pilate, and the part which the former took in the history of the Crucifixion (xxiii. 5—12), the estimate which our Lord had passed upon his character (xiii. 32). That acquaintance served probably, in the nature of things, to introduce him to a knowledge of the other members of the Herodian family, of whom we learn so much from him, and, of the Evangelists, from him only (iii. 1; Acts xii. 1—25; xxv. 13; xxvi. 32).

(2) During the years of St. Luke's work at Troas and Philippi, there were, we may presume, but few such opportunities; but when he accompanied St. Paul on his last journey to Jerusalem, they must have been multiplied indefinitely. Mnason of Cyprus, the old disciple (a disciple *from the beginning*, as the word signifies, Acts xxi. 16), must have had much to tell him. During St. Paul's stay at Cæsarea there was ample time for him to become acquainted with the current oral, or, as his own words imply, written teaching of the churches of Palestine, which formed the groundwork of what is common to him and the first two Gospels, as well as with the many facts that connect themselves with that city in the narrative of the Acts. We cannot, however, think of a man of St. Luke's culture bent upon writing a history, because he was not satisfied with the "many" fragmentary records that he found already in circulation, resting at Cæsarea during the two years of St. Paul's imprisonment without pushing his inquiries further. We may think of him accordingly as journeying in regions where he knew our Lord had worked, most of which lay within two or three days' easy journey, while yet there was little record of His ministry there, and so collecting such facts as the raising of the widow's son at Nain (vii. 11—17), the appearance of the risen Lord to the disciples at Emmaus (xxiv. 13—35), the full record, peculiar to this Gospel, of His ministry and teaching in Peræa.

(3) The profession of St. Luke as a physician, probably also the character that he had acquired as the guide and adviser of the sisterhood at Philippi (see Notes on that Epistle), would naturally give him access to a whole circle of eye-witnesses who were not so likely to come within the range of St. Matthew and St. Mark. He alone mentions the company of devout women who followed Jesus during part, at least, of His ministry (viii. 2, 3), and as he gives the names of the chief members of the company, it is natural to infer that he was personally acquainted with them. So far as they were sharers in the feelings

of other women, we may believe, with hardly the shadow of a doubt, that they would dwell especially on all that connected itself with the childhood and youth of the Lord whom they had loved with such devout tenderness, that the bereaved mother whom St. John had taken to his own home (John xix. 27)—sometimes, perhaps, in Galilee, sometimes in Jerusalem—would be the centre of their reverential love. From them, therefore, as those who would be sure to treasure up such a record, St. Luke may well have derived the narrative—obviously a translation from the Hebrew or Aramaic of Palestine—which forms the introduction to his Gospel (chaps. i. and ii.), and which is distinct in character and style from the rest of his Gospel. But informants such as these would be sure to treasure up also the special instances of our Lord's tenderness and sympathy for women like themselves, and it is accordingly not more than a legitimate inference from the facts of human nature to trace to them such narratives as that of the woman that was a sinner (vii. 36—50), of the contrasted characters of the two sisters at Bethany (x. 38—42), of the woman who cried out, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee . . ." (xi. 27),* of the daughters of Jerusalem who met their Lord on His way to Calvary (xxiii. 27—29), of those, again, who had come up from Galilee and who stood afar off beholding His death upon the cross (xxiii. 49), and of their buying spices and ointment for His entombment (xxiii. 56).

On the whole, then, everything tends to the belief that St. Luke's statement that he had carefully traced to their sources, as far as he could, the facts which he narrates, was no idle boast; that he had many and ample opportunities for doing so; and that he did this, as we have seen above, with the culture and discernment which his previous training was likely to have imparted. It is obvious, however, that coming, as he did, into the field of inquiry some thirty, or at least twenty, years or so after the events, many of the facts and sayings would reach him in a comparatively isolated form; and though there is an obvious and earnest endeavour to relate them, as he says, "in order," it might not always be easy to ascertain what that order had actually been. And this is, in part at least, the probable explanation of the seeming dislocation of facts which we find on comparing his Gospel with those of St. Matthew and St. Mark. (See Notes on Matt. viii. 1; ix. 1.)

**IV. The first readers of the Gospel.**—St. Luke's record differs in a very marked way from the other three in being addressed, or, as we should say, dedicated, to an individual. Who and what Theophilus was, we have but few data for conjecturing. The epithet "most excellent"—the same word as that used by Tertullus in addressing Felix (Acts xxiv. 3)—implies social or official position of some dignity. The absence of that epithet in the dedication of the Acts indicates, perhaps, that the Evangelist had then come to be on terms of greater familiarity with him. The reference to Italian localities of minor importance, as places familiar to the reader as well as writer, in Acts xxviii. 12—14, suggests the conclusion that he was of Latin, probably of Roman, origin; the fact that the Gospel was written for him in Greek, that he shared the culture which was then common to well nigh all educated Romans. He was a convert, accordingly, from the religion of Rome to that of Christ, though he may, of course, have passed through Judaism, as a schoolmaster leading him to Christ. The teaching which he had already received as a catechumen had embraced an outline of the facts recorded in the Gospel (i. 3), and St. Luke wrote to raise the knowledge so gained to a standard of greater completeness. The name, it may be noted, was, like Timotheus, not an uncommon one. Among St. Luke's contemporaries, it was borne by one of the Jewish high priests, the brother-in-law of Caiaphas (Jos. *Ant.* xviii. 4, § 3), who probably was responsible for St. Paul's mission of persecution to Damascus, and by some official at Athens who was condemned for perjury by the Areopagus (Tacit. *Ann.* ii. 55). Beyond this all is conjecture, or tradition which dissolves into conjecture. He is said to have been, by this or that ecclesiastical writer, an Achæan, or an Alexandrian, or an Antiochian; he has been wildly identified by some modern critics, with one or other of the two persons thus named; it has been held by others that the name (= "one who loves God") simply designated the ideal Christian reader whom St. Luke had in view.

It is, however, reasonable to infer that the Gospel, though dedicated to him, was meant for the wider circle of the class of which he was the representative, *i.e.*, in other words, that it was meant to be especially a Gospel for the educated heathen. It will be seen in what follows, that this view is confirmed by its more prominent characteristics.

**V. The characteristics of the Gospel.**—(1) It has been said, not without some measure of truth, that one main purpose of the Acts of the Apostles was to reconcile the two parties in the Apostolic Church which tended to arrange themselves, with more or less of open antagonism, under the names of St. Peter and St. Paul, by showing that the two Apostles were substantially of one mind; that the former had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles (Acts x. 48), and had consented to the great charter of their freedom (Acts xv. 7); that the latter had shown his reverence for the ceremonial law by twice taking on himself, wholly or in part, the vow of a Nazarite (Acts xviii. 18, xxi. 26). Something of the same catholicity of purpose is to be found in the Gospel which bears St. Luke's name. It was obviously natural that it should be so in the work of the friend of one who became as a Jew to Jews, and as a Greek to Greeks (1 Cor. ix. 20). Thus we have the whole history of the first two chapters, and the genealogy in chap. iii., obviously meeting the tastes, in the first instance, of Jewish readers on the one side, and on the other the choice of narratives or teachings that specially bring out the width and universality of the love of God, the breaking down of the barriers of Jewish exclusiveness, the reference to the widow of Sarepta and Naaman the Syrian (iv. 26, 27), the mission of the Seventy as indicating the universality of the kingdom (x. 1), the pardon of the penitent robber (xxiii. 43), the parables of the Good Samaritan (x. 30—37), of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Piece of Money, and the Prodigal Son (chap. xv.); midway between the two, the story of Zacchæus, the publican, treated as a heathen, and yet recognised as a son of Abraham (xix. 9).

(2) In the Acts, again, especially in the earlier chapters, we note a manifest tendency in the writer to dwell on all acts of self-denial, and on the lavish generosity which made the life of the Apostolic Church the realisation, in part at least, of an ideal communism

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* It will be noted that our Lord's words (xxiii. 29), "Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck," seem intended to remind those who heard them of the far-different benediction which one of them had once uttered.

(Acts ii. 44, 45; iv. 32, 37; vi. 1; ix. 36). So in the Gospel we recognise, over and above what he has in common with others, a principle of selection, leading him to dwell on all parts of our Lord's teaching that pointed in the same direction. The parables of the Rich Fool (xii. 16—21), of the Rich Man and Lazarus (xvi. 19—31), of the Unjust Steward, with its direct and immediate application (xvi. 1—14); the counsel to the Pharisees to "give alms," and so to find a more than ceremonial purity (xi. 41); to His disciples to sell what they have and to seek for treasures in heaven (xii. 33); the beatitudes that fall on the poor and the hungry (vi. 20, 21), are all instances of his desire to impress this ideal of an unselfish life upon the minds of his readers. Even in his account of the Baptist's teaching, we find him supplying what neither St. Matthew nor St. Mark had given—the counsel which John gave to the people—"He that hath two coats let him impart to him that hath none" (iii. 11). In this also we may recognise the work of one who was like-minded with St. Paul. He, too, laboured with his own hands that he might minister to the necessities of others (Acts xx. 34), and loved to dwell on the pattern which Christ had set when, "being rich, He for our sakes became poor" (2 Cor. viii. 9), and praised those whose deep poverty had abounded to the riches of their liberality (2 Cor. viii. 2). He, too, had learnt the lesson that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth (Luke xii. 15), and had been initiated into the mystery of knowing how, with an equal mind, to be full and to be hungry, to abound and to suffer need. (See Note on Phil. iv. 12.) He, too, warns men against the deceitfulness of riches, and the hurtful lusts springing from them that plunge men in the abyss of destruction (1 Tim. vi. 9, 17).

Lastly, we cannot fail to note, as we read his Gospel, the special stress which he, far more than St. Matthew or St. Mark, lays upon the prayers of the Christ. It is from him we learn that it was as Jesus was "praying" at His baptism that the heavens were opened (iii. 21); that it was while He was praying that the fashion of His countenance was altered, and there came on Him the glory of the Transfiguration (ix. 29); that He was "praying" when the disciples came and asked Him to teach them to pray (xi. 1); that He had prayed for Peter that his faith might not fail (xxii. 32). In the life of prayer, no less than in that of a self-chosen poverty, His was the pattern-life which His disciples were—each in his measure and according to his power—to endeavour to reproduce.

**VI. Relations to St. Matthew and St. Mark.**—It would be a fair summary of the account of the Gospel of St. Luke thus given, to say that it is in its universality, its tenderness, its spirit of self-sacrifice, pre-eminently the GOSPEL OF THE SAINTLY LIFE, presenting to us that aspect of our Lord's ministry in which He appears as the great Example, no less than the great Teacher. In other words, since He is represented as at once holy, undefiled, and separate from sinners (Heb. vii. 26), and as able to have compassion on their infirmities (Heb. iv. 15), it is the Gospel of the Son of Man as the great High Priest of humanity in the human phase of that priesthood. It follows with a marvellous fitness upon the Gospel of St. Matthew, that had brought before us the portraiture of the true King and the true Scribe—upon that of St. Mark, in which we have seen the lineaments of the true Servant of the Lord. It prepares the way for that of St. John, which presents the Incarnate Word as manifesting His Eternal Priesthood in its sacrificial and mediatorial aspects. In its pervading tone and spirit, it is, as we have seen, essentially Pauline. In its language and style, however, it presents not a few affinities with an Epistle, the Pauline authorship of which is at least questionable, and which not a few have seen reason to look upon as the work of Apollos—the Epistle to the Hebrews. On this ground chiefly many critics, beginning with Clement of Alexandria (about A.D. 200), a man of wide and varied culture, have held that Epistle to have been the work of St. Luke, elaborating and polishing the thoughts of St. Paul (Euseb. *Hist.* vi. 14). It has, he says, speaking as a critic of style, "the same complexion" as the Acts. Other considerations, it is believed, outweigh the arguments based on that fact; but the resemblance is sufficient to indicate that there were some affinities connecting the two writers, and the most natural is that which supposes them both to have had an Alexandrian training, and to have formed their style upon the more rhetorical books of the later Hellenistic additions to the canon of the Old Testament, such as the Books of Maccabees as the model of history, and the Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus for that of the more systematic treatment of doctrine. The points of resemblance between the Book of Wisdom and the Epistle to the Hebrews are indeed so numerous as to have suggested to the present writer the thought of identity of authorship.*

It is, of course, obvious to remark that many of the facts referred to are found also in the other Gospels, and formed part of the current oral teaching out of which the first three Gospels grew. Admitting this, however, it is clear that the history of Apollos brought him specially within the range of those who were likely to be conversant with St. Luke's teaching; and if we suppose him to have any written record before him, it is far more likely to have been the third Gospel than either the first or second. The two men, who were friends and companions of the same Apostle, were, at any rate, likely to have met and known each other, and if so it would not be strange that, with like character and like culture, there should be a reciprocal influence between them. Traces of that influence are to be found, it is believed, in the references in the Epistle to some of the passages which, though common to the other Gospels, are yet specially characteristic of this Gospel; to the temptations of the Son of Man as giving Him power to sympathise with sinners, though Himself without sin (Heb. iv. 15); to His prayers and supplications and strong crying (Heb. v. 7, 8); to His endurance of the cross, despising the shame (Heb. xii. 2); His endurance also of the contradiction of sinners (Heb. xii. 3); to His being the Mediator of a new covenant (Heb. xii. 24), the great Shepherd of the sheep (Heb. xiii. 20).

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* The facts that bear upon St. Luke's work, as the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, are naturally reserved for the *Introduction* to that Book.

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE.

CHAPTER I.—(1) Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, (2) even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; (3) it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, (4) that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

Before the account called Anno Domini the sixth year.

(5) There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judæa, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron,

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(1) **Forasmuch as many have taken in hand.**—On the general bearing of this passage on the questions connected with the authorship and plan of the Gospel, see the *Introduction.* Here we note (1), what is visible in the English, but is yet more conspicuous in the Greek, the finished structure of the sentences as compared with the simpler openings of the other Gospels; (2) the evidence which the verse supplies of the existence of many written documents professing to give an account of the Gospel history at the time when St. Luke wrote—*i.e.*, probably before St. Paul's death in A.D. 65. The "many" *may* have included St. Matthew and St. Mark, but we cannot say. There is no tone of disparagement in the way in which the writer speaks of his predecessors. He simply feels that they have not exhausted the subject, and that his inquiries have enabled him to add something.

**Of those things which are most surely believed among us.**—Better, *of the things that have been accomplished among us.*

(2) **Even as they delivered them unto us.**—There is something noticeable in the candour with which the writer disclaims the character of an eyewitness. The word "delivered" is the same as that used by St. Paul when he speaks of the history of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. xi. 23—25) and of the Resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 3—7), and, with its cognate noun "tradition" (2 Thess. ii. 15), would seem to have been almost a technical term for the oral teaching which at least included an outline of our Lord's life and teaching.

**Ministers of the word.**—The word used is that which describes the work of an attendant, something between a "slave" and a "minister," in the later ecclesiastical use of the term as equivalent to "deacon" or "preacher." It is used of St. Mark in Acts xiii. 5. On the opportunities St. Luke enjoyed for converse with such as these, see *Introduction.* The "word" is used in its more general Pauline sense (as *e.g.*, 1 Cor. i. 18; ii. 4), as equivalent to the "gospel," not in the higher personal meaning which it acquired afterwards in St. John (1 John ii. 14).

(3) **Having had perfect understanding of all things.**—Better, *having traced* (or *investigated*) *all things from their source.* The verb used is one which implies following the course of events step by step. The adverb which follows exactly answers to what we call the *origines* of any great movement. It goes further back than the actual beginning of the movement itself.

**In order.**—The word implies a distinct aim at chronological arrangement, but it does not necessarily follow, where the order in St. Luke varies from that of the other Gospels, that it is therefore the true order. In such matters the writer, who was avowedly a compiler, might well be at some disadvantage as compared with others.

**Most excellent Theophilus.**—The adjective is the same as that used of Felix by Tertullus (Acts xxiv. 3), and implies at least high social position, if not official rank. The name, which means "Friend of God," might well be taken by a Christian convert at his baptism. Nothing more can be known of the person so addressed beyond the fact that he was probably a Gentile convert who had already been partially instructed in the facts of the Gospel history.

(4) **Wherein thou hast been instructed.**—The verb used is that from which are formed the words "catechise," "catechumen," &c., and implies oral teaching—in its later sense, teaching preparatory to baptism. The passage is important as showing that such instruction mainly turned on the facts of our Lord's life, death, and resurrection, and on the records of His teaching.

(5) **There was in the days of Herod.**—The writer begins, as he had promised, with the first facts in the divine order of events. The two chapters that follow have every appearance of having been based originally on an independent document, and that probably a Hebrew one. On its probable sources, see *Introduction.* On Herod and this period of his reign, see Notes on Matt. ii. 1.

**Zacharias.**—The name (="he who remembers Jehovah," or, perhaps, "he whom Jehovah remembers,") had been borne by many in the history of Israel, among others by the son of Jehoiada (2 Chron. xxiv. 20), and by the prophet of the return from the Babylonian Captivity.

**Of the course of Abia.**—The Greek word so translated implies a system of rotation, each "set" or "course" of the priests serving from Sabbath to Sabbath. That named after Abia, or Abijah, appears and her name *was* Elisabeth. (6) And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. (7) And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were *now* well stricken in years. (8) And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, (9) according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.[a] (10) And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. (11) And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. (12) And when Zacharias saw *him*, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. (13) But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. (14) And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. (15) For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither

[a] Ex. 30. 7; Lev. 16, 17.

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in 1 Chron. xxiv. 10 as the eighth of the twenty-four courses into which the houses of Eleazar and Ithamar were divided by David. On the first return from the Captivity only four of these courses are mentioned as having come back to Jerusalem (Ezra ii. 36—39), and the name Abijah is not one of them. It appears, however, in later lists (Neh. x. 7; xii. 4, 17), and the four-and-twenty sets were probably soon re-organised.

**His wife was of the daughters of Aaron.**—The priests were free to marry outside the limits of their own caste under certain limitations as to the character of their wives (Lev. xxi. 7), and the fact of a priestly descent on both sides was therefore worth noticing.

**Her name was Elisabeth.**—The name in its Hebrew form of Elisheba had belonged to the wife of Aaron, who was of the tribe of Judah (Ex. vi. 23), and was naturally an honoured name among the daughters of the priestly line. It appears in an altered form (*Jehovah* being substituted for *El*) in Jehosheba, the wife of the priest Jehoiada (2 Kings xi. 2).

(6) **Commandments and ordinances.**—The former word covered all the moral laws of the Pentateuch, the latter (as in Heb. ix. 1), its outward and ceremonial rules.

(7) **Well stricken in years.**—Literally, *far advanced in their days.*

(8) **In the order of his course.**—This was settled by rotation. Attempts have been made by reckoning back from the date of the destruction of the Temple, when it is known that the "course" of Joiarib was ministering on the ninth day of the Jewish month Ab, to fix the precise date of the events here narrated, and so of our Lord's Nativity, but all such attempts are necessarily more or less precarious.

(9) **His lot was to burn incense.**—The order of the courses was, as has been said, one of rotation. The distribution of functions during the week was determined by lot. That of offering incense, symbolising, as it did, the priestly work of presenting the prayers of the people, and joining his own with them (Ps. cxli. 2; Rev. v. 8), was of all priestly acts the most distinctive (2 Chron. xxvi. 18). At such a moment all the hopes of one who looked for the Christ as the consolation of Israel would gather themselves into one great intercession.

**Into the temple of the Lord**—*i.e.*, the Holy Place, into which none but the priests might enter.

(10) **The whole multitude.**—Knowing as we do from this Gospel, what hopes were cherished by devout hearts at this time, we may well believe that the prayers of the people, no less than those of the priest, turned towards the manifestation of the kingdom of God. In that crowd, we may well believe, were the aged Simeon (chap. ii. 25), and Anna the prophetess (chap. ii. 36), and many others who waited for redemption in Jerusalem (chap. ii. 38). What followed was, on this view, an answer to their prayers.

(11) **The altar of incense.**—The altar stood just in front of the veil that divided the outer sanctuary from the Holy of Holies. It was made of shittim wood, and overlaid with gold, both symbols of incorruption (Ex. xxx. 1—7; xl. 5, 26). Its position connected it so closely with the innermost sanctuary that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (ix. 4; but see Note there) seems to reckon it as belonging to that, and not unto the outer. It symbolised accordingly the closest approach to God which was then possible for any but the high priest, when, in his typical character, he entered the Holy of Holies on the day of Atonement.

(12) **He was troubled.**—It lies in the nature of the case that during all the long years of Zachariah's ministration, he had seen no such manifestation. As far as we may reason from the analogy of other angelic appearances, the outward form was that of a "young man clothed in white linen," or in "bright apparel" (Matt. xxviii. 3; Mark xvi. 5)—a kind of transfigured Levite, as One greater than the angels, when he manifested himself amid the imagery of the Temple, appeared as in the garments of a glorified priesthood (Rev. i. 13).

(13) **Thy prayer is heard.**—The words imply a prayer on the part of Zacharias, not that he might have a son (that hope appears to have died out long before), but that the Kingdom of God might come. Praying for this he receives more than he asks, and the long yearning of his soul for a son who might bear his part in that Kingdom is at last realised.

**Thou shalt call his name John.**—The English monosyllable represents the Greek *Joannes*, the Hebrew *Jochanan*. The name appears as belonging to the men of various tribes (1 Chron. iii. 15; Ezra viii. 12; Jer. xli. 11). As the meaning of the Hebrew word is "Jehovah is gracious," the announcement of the name was in itself a pledge of the outpouring of the grace of God.

(14) **Many shall rejoice.**—The words point to what had been the priest's prayer. He had been seeking the joy of many rather than his own, and now the one was to be fruitful in the other.

(15) **And shall drink neither wine nor strong drink.**—The child now promised was to grow up as a Nazarite (Num. vi. 4), and to keep that vow all his life, as the representative of the ascetic, the

wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. (16) And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.[a] (17) And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to[1] the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. (18) And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. (19) And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. (20) And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season. (21) And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple. (22) And when he came out, he could not speak unto them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless. (23) And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house. (24) And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, (25) Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on *me*, to take away my reproach among men. (26) And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee,

[a] Mal. 4. 6.

[1] Or, *by*.

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“ separated,” form (this is the meaning of the term) of a consecrated life. He was to be what Samson had been (Judg. xiii. 4), and probably Samuel also (1 Sam. i. 11), and the house of Jonadab the son of Rechab (Jer. xxxv. 6). The close connection between the Nazarite and the prophetic life is seen in Amos ii. 11, 12. The absence of the lower form of stimulation implied the capacity for the higher enthusiasm which was the gift of God. The same contrast is seen in St. Paul's words, “ Be not drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit (Eph. v. 18).

**He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost.**—The words would be understood by Zacharias from the Hebrew point of view, not as seen in the fuller light of Christian theology. As such they would convey the thought of the highest prophetic inspiration, as in Isa. xi. 2; lxi. 1; Joel ii. 28.

**Even from his mother's womb.**—The thought of a life from first to last in harmony with itself and consecrated to the prophet's work, had its prototype in Jeremiah (Jer. i. 5).

(16) **Shall he turn to the Lord their God.**—The opening words of the message of the New Covenant spring out of the closing words of the last of the prophets (Mal. iv. 6), and point to the revival of the Elijah ministry, which is more definitely announced in the next verse.

(17) **To the wisdom of the just.**—The margin, *by the wisdom*, is undoubtedly the right rendering.

(19) **I am Gabriel.**—No names of angels appear in the Old Testament till after the Babylonian Exile. Then we have Gabriel (=“ the strong one—or the hero—of God ”), in Dan. viii. 16; Michael (=“ who is like unto God? ”), in Dan. x. 21, xii. 1; Raphael (=“ the healer of God ”—*i.e.*, the divine healer), in Tobit xii. 15, as one of the seven holy angels which present the prayers of the saints. As having appeared in the prophecies which, more than any others, were the germ of the Messianic expectations which the people cherished, there was a fitness in the mission now given to Gabriel to prepare the way for the Messiah's coming.

**That stand in the presence of God.**—The imagery was drawn from the customs of an Eastern Court, in which those stood who were the most honoured ministers of the king, while others fell prostrate in silent homage. (Comp. the “ angel of His presence ” in Isa. lxiii. 9, with our Lord's language as to the angels that “ behold the face ” of His Father, Matt. xviii. 10.)

**To shew thee these glad tidings.**—Literally, *to evangelise.* The word is memorable as the first utterance, as far as the Gospel records are concerned, of that which was to be the watchword of the kingdom. It was not, however, a new word, and its employment here was, in part at least, determined by Isaiah's use of it (xl. 9; lxi. 1).

(20) **Behold, thou shalt be dumb.**—The question was answered, the demand for a sign granted, but the demand had implied a want of faith, and therefore the sign took the form of a penalty. The vision and the words of the angel, harmonising as they did with all Zechariah's previous convictions, ought to have been enough for him.

(22) **A vision.**—The word is used as distinguished from “ dream,” to imply that what had been witnessed had been seen with the waking sense. The look of awe, the strange gestures, the unwonted silence, all showed that he had come under the influence of some supernatural power.

**He beckoned unto them.**—The tense implies continued and repeated action.

(23) **The days of his ministration.**—The word used for “ ministration ” conveys, like the “ ministering spirits ” of Heb. i. 14, the idea of liturgical service. The “ days ” were, according to the usual order of the Temple, from Sabbath to Sabbath (2 Kings xi. 5).

(25) **To take away my reproach among men.**—The words express in almost their strongest form the Jewish feeling as to maternity. To have no children was more than a misfortune. It seemed to imply some secret sin which God was punishing with barrenness. So we have Rachel's cry, “ Give me children, or else I die ” (Gen. xxx. 1); and Hannah's “ bitterness of soul ” when “ her adversary provoked her to make her fret ” (1 Sam. i. 6—10).

(26) **And in the sixth month.**—The time is obviously reckoned from the commencement of the period specified in verse 24.

named Nazareth, (27) to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name *was* Mary. (28) And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, *thou that art* highly favoured,[1] the Lord *is* with thee: blessed *art* thou among women. (29) And when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. (30) And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. (31) And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son,[a] and shalt call his name JESUS. (32) He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall

[1] Or, *graciously accepted*, or, *much graced*: see ver. 30.

[a] Isa. 7. 14; Matt. i. 21.

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**A city of Galilee, named Nazareth.**—The town so named (now *en-Nazirah*) was situated in a valley among the hills that rise to a height of about 500 feet on the north of the Plain of Esdraelon. The valley itself is richly cultivated. The grassy slopes of the hills are clothed in spring-time with flowers. On one side there is a steep ridge that forms something like a precipice (chap. iv. 29). In the rainy season the streams flow down the slopes of the hills and rush in torrents through the valleys. From a hill just behind the town, the modern *Neby Ismail*, there is one of the finest views in Palestine, including Lebanon and Hermon to the north, Carmel to the west, with glimpses of the Mediterranean, and to the south the Plain of Esdraelon and the mountains of Samaria, to the east and south-east Gilead, and Tabor, and Gilboa. It is a three days' journey from Jerusalem, about twenty miles from Ptolemais, and eighteen from the Sea of Galilee, six from Mount Tabor, about six from Cana, and nine from Nain. The name, as stated in the Note on Matt. ii. 23, was probably derived from the Hebrew *Netzer* (=a branch), and conveying something of the same meaning as our *-hurst*, or *-holm*, in English topography.

(27) **To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph.**—Of the parentage of Mary the canonical Gospels tell us nothing, and the legends of the apocryphal have no claim to credit. That her mother's name was Anna, that she surpassed the maidens of her own age in wisdom, that she went as a child into the Temple, that she had many who sought her hand, and that they agreed to decide their claims by laying their rods before the Holy Place and seeing which budded, and that Joseph thus became the accepted suitor—this may be worth mentioning, as having left its impress on Christian art, but it has no claim to the character even of tradition. The scanty notices in the Gospels are (1) that she was a "cousin," or more generally a "kinswoman," of Elizabeth, and may, therefore, have been, by her parentage, wholly or in part of the daughters of Aaron. (2) That she had a sister who, according to a somewhat doubtful construction of an ambiguous sentence, may also have borne the name of Mary or Mariam (the "Miriam" of the Old Testament), and been afterwards the wife of Cleophas, or, more correctly, Clopas (John xix. 25). The absence of any mention of her parents suggests the thought that she was an orphan, and the whole narrative of the Nativity presupposes poverty. Assuming the *Magnificat* to have been not merely the sudden inspiration of the moment, but, in some sense, the utterance of the cherished thoughts of years, we may think of her as feeding upon the psalms and hymns and prophecies of the Sacred Books, and knowing, as she did, that the man to whom she was betrothed was of the house of David, this may well have drawn her expectations of redemption into the line of looking for the Christ, who was to be the son of David. Of Joseph, we know that he was, possibly by a twofold lineage (but see Note on chap. iii. 23), the heir of that house, and must have known himself to be so. He was but a carpenter in a Galilean village, probably older than his betrothed, possibly a widower with sons and daughters, possibly the guardian of nephews and nieces who had been left orphans, but the documents which contained his genealogy must have been precious heirlooms, and the hopes that God would raise up the tabernacle of David that had fallen, to which one of those sons or nephews afterwards gave utterance (Acts xv. 16), could never have been utterly extinguished.

(28) **Highly favoured.**—The verb is the same as that which is translated, "hath made us accepted" in Eph. i. 6; and, on the whole, this, which is expressed in one of the marginal readings, seems the truest. The *plena gratiâ* of the Vulgate has no warrant in the meaning of the word.

**The Lord is with thee.**—Better, *the Lord be with thee*, as the more usual formula of salutation, as in Ruth ii. 4.

**Blessed art thou among women.**—The words are omitted in many of the best MSS.

(29) **She was troubled at his saying.**—The same word is used as had been used of Zacharias. With Mary, as with him, the first feeling was one of natural terror. Who was the strange visitor, and what did the strange greeting mean?

(30) **Thou hast found favour with God.**—The noun is the same as that elsewhere translated "grace," but the latter word, though fit enough in itself, has become so associated with the technicalities of theology that it is better, in this place, to retain "favour."

(31) **Behold, thou shalt conceive.**—St. Luke does not refer to the prophecy of Isa. vii. 14, but it is clear from Mary's answer that she understood the words of the angel in the sense which St. Matthew gives to those of the prophet. What perplexed her was the reference to the conception and the birth in a prediction which made no mention of her approaching marriage. The absence of the reference is at least worth noticing, as showing that men were not necessarily led by their interpretation of the prophecy to imagine its fulfilment.

**Shalt call his name JESUS.**—See Note on Matt. i. 21. The revelation of the name, with all its mysterious fulness of meaning, was made, we may note, to Joseph and Mary independently.

(32) **Shall be called the Son of the Highest.**—It is noticeable that this name applied to our Lord by the angel, appears afterwards as uttered by the demoniacs (Mark v. 7). On the history of the name, see Note on Mark v. 7.

**The throne of his father David.**—The words seem at first to suggest the thought that the Virgin was of the house of David, and that the title to the throne was thus derived through her. This may have give unto him the throne of his father David: (33) and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever;[a] and of his kingdom there shall be no end. (34) Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? (35) And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. (36) And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. (37) For with God nothing shall be impossible. (38) And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her. (39) And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; (40) and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. (41) And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the

[a] Dan. 7. 14; Mic. 4. 7.

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been so (see Note on chap. iii. 23—38), and the intermarriage which had taken place in olden times between the house of Aaron and that of David (Ex. vi. 23; 2 Kings xi. 2) show that this might be quite consistent with the relationship to Elizabeth mentioned in verse 36. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the genealogies, both in St. Matthew and St. Luke, appear, at first sight, to give the lineage of Joseph only, and therefore that, if this were, as many have believed, the Evangelist's point of view, our Lord, notwithstanding the supernatural birth, was thought of as inheriting from him. The form of the promise, which might well lead to the expectation of a revived kingdom of Israel after the manner of that of David, takes its place among the most memorable instances of prophecies that have been fulfilled in quite another fashion than those who first heard them could have imagined possible. That the Evangelist who recorded it held that it was fulfilled in the Kingdom of Heaven, the spiritual sovereignty of the Christ, is shown by the fact that he records it in the same Gospel as that which tells of the Crucifixion and Ascension.

(33) **He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever.**—Here, again, the apparent promise is that of a kingdom restored to Israel such as the disciples expected even after the Resurrection (Acts i. 6). It needed to be interpreted by events before men could see that it was fulfilled in the history of Christendom as the true Israel of God (Rom. ix. 6; Gal. vi. 16).

**Of his kingdom there shall be no end.**—The words of St. Paul, in 1 Cor. xv. 24—28, seem at first to point to a limit of time when the kingdom of the Christ shall find an end, but a closer study of his meaning shows that he is speaking of that kingdom as involving contest with the hostile forces of evil. The exercise of sovereignty may, in this sense, cease when all conflict is over, but it ceases by being perfected, not by passing away after the fashion of earthly kingdoms. The delegated or mediatorial headship of the Christ is merged in the absolute unity of the monarchy of God.

(34) **How shall this be?**—The question of the Virgin is not altogether of the same nature as that of Zacharias in verse 18. He asks by what sign he shall know that the words were true which told him of a son in his old age. Mary is told of a far greater marvel, for her question shows that she understood the angel to speak of the birth as antecedent to her marriage, and she, accepting the words in faith, does not demand a sign, but reverently seeks to know the manner of their accomplishment.

(35) **The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee.**—See Note on verse 15. Here, however, the context would suggest to one familiar with the sacred writings, another aspect of the Spirit's work, as quickening the dead chaos into life (Gen. i. 2), as being the source of life to all creation (Ps. civ. 30).

**The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.**—The divine name is used in obvious harmony with "the Son of the Highest" in verse 32.

**Therefore also . . . shall be called the Son of God.**—The words appear to rest the title, "Son of God," rather on the supernatural birth than on the eternal pre-existence of the Son as the Word that was "in the beginning with God and was God" (John i. 1), and we may accept the fact that the message of the angel was so far a partial, not a complete, revelation of the mystery of the Incarnation. It gave a sufficient reason for the name which should be given to the Son of Mary, and more was not then required.

(36) **Thy cousin Elisabeth.**—See Notes on verses 27 and 32. Taking the word in its usual sense, it would imply that either the father or the mother of Mary had been of the house of Aaron, or that the mother of Elizabeth had been of the house of David.

(38) **Behold the handmaid of the Lord . . .**—The words seem to show a kind of half-consciousness that the lot which she thus accepts might bring with it unknown sufferings, as well as untold blessedness. She shrinks, as it were, from the awfulness of the position thus assigned to her, but she can say, as her Son said afterwards, when His time of agony was come, "Not my will, but Thine be done." It may be that the more immediate peril of which St. Matthew speaks (i. 19), flashed even then upon her soul as one that could not be escaped. (Comp. chap. ii. 35.)

(39) **The hill country . . . a city of Juda.**—The description is too vague to be identified with any certainty. The form of the proper noun is the same as that in "Bethlehem, of the land of Juda," in Matt. ii. 6. The city may have been one of those assigned to the priests within the limits of the tribe of Judah, and if so, it is interesting to think of the Virgin as undertaking a journey which brought her not far from the very spot in which she was to give birth to the divine Child. No city of the name of Juda is known, but there is a Juttah in Josh. xv. 55, xxi. 16, in the neighbourhood of Maon and the Judæan Carmel, and therefore in the "hill country," which may possibly be that which is here referred to.

(41) **The salutation of Mary.**—The words of the greeting were, we may believe, the usual formula, "Peace be with thee," or "The Lord be with thee," possibly united with some special words of gratulation on what she had heard from the angel.

salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: (42) and she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed *art* thou among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of thy womb. (43) And whence *is* this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? (44) For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. (45) And blessed *is* she that believed:[1] for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord. (46) And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, (47) and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. (48) For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. (49) For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy *is* his name. (50) And his mercy *is* on them that fear him from generation to generation. (51) He hath shewed strength with his arm;[a] he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.[b] (52) He hath put down the mighty from *their* seats,[c] and exalted them of low degree. (53) He hath filled the hungry with good things;[d] and the rich he hath sent empty away. (54) He hath holpen his servant Israel, in re-

[a] Isa. 51. 9.

[b] Ps. 33. 10.

[1] Or, *which believed that there.*

[c] 1 Sam. 2. 6.

[d] Ps. 34. 10.

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**Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost.**—What had been predicted of the Child (verse 15) was now fulfilled *ex abundanti* in the mother. The fact related, so far as we look to human sources of information, must obviously have come to St. Luke, directly or indirectly, from the Virgin herself.

(42) **Blessed art thou among women.**—The language, like that of most of the utterances in these chapters, is taken from the poetry of the older Scriptures, but there is a singular contrast between its application there to the murderess Jael (Judg. v. 24), and here to the mother of the Lord.

(43) **Whence is this to me . . . ?**—The sudden inspiration bids Elizabeth, rising above all lower thoughts, to recognise that the child of Mary would be also the Son of the Highest. The contrast leaves no room for doubt that she used the word "Lord" in its highest sense. "Great" as her own son was to be (verse 15) in the sight of the Lord, here was the mother of One yet greater, even of the Lord Himself.

(45) **Blessed is she that believed.**—The two renderings, "for there shall be," and "that there shall be," are equally tenable grammatically. On internal grounds there seems a balance in favour of the latter, as the other interpretation appears to make the fulfilment of the promise dependent upon the Virgin's faith.

(46) **My soul doth magnify the Lord.**—We come to the first of the great canticles recorded by St. Luke, which, since the time of Cæsarius of Arles (A.D. 540), who first introduced them into public worship, have formed part of the hymnal treasures of Western Christendom. We may think of the Virgin as having committed to writing at the time, or having remembered afterwards, possibly with some natural modifications, what she then spoke. Here the song of praise is manifestly based upon that of Hannah (1 Sam. ii. 1—10), both in its opening words and in much of its substance, and is so far significant of the hopes, and, if we may so speak, studies, of the maiden of Nazareth.

(47) **In God my Saviour.**—We may well believe that this choice of the name was determined by the meaning of the name, implying God's work of salvation, which she had been told was to be given to her Son.

(48) **The low estate of his handmaiden.**—Note the recurrence of the word that had been used in verse 37, as expressing the character which she was now ready to accept, whatever it might involve.

**All generations shall call me blessed.**—The words have, of course, been partly instrumental in bringing about their own fulfilment; but what a vision of the future they must have implied then on the part of the village maiden who uttered them! Not her kinswoman only, but all generations should join in that beatitude.

(50) **His mercy is on them that fear him.**—The words, as read by those for whom St. Luke wrote, would seem almost to foreshadow the Gospel of the Apostle of the Gentiles. Those that "feared God" were to be found not only among the children of Abraham, but also among "every nation" (Acts x. 2, 35), and He would shew forth His mercy to all in whom that temper should be found.

(51) **He hath shewed strength.**—Literally, *He wrought strength.* Here the parallelism with 1 Sam. ii. 3 becomes very close. Of whom the speaker thought as among the "proud," we cannot know. They may have been the potentates of the world in which she lived, Herod and the Emperor of Rome. They may have been the men of Jerusalem, who despised Galilee; or those of the other towns and villages of Galilee, who despised Nazareth; or, though less probably, those of Nazareth itself, who despised the carpenter and his betrothed.

(52) **The mighty.**—The word (that from which we get our English "dynasty") is applied to the eunuch "of great authority" under Candace, in Acts viii. 27, and is used as a divine name in "the blessed and only Potentate" of 1 Tim. vi. 15. Here it is used generally of all human rulers.

**From their seats.**—Better, *their thrones,* as the word is for the most part translated. (Comp. Matt. xix. 28, and in this very chapter, verse 32.)

**Of low degree.**—The adjective is that from which the noun translated "low estate," in verse 48, had been formed.

(53) **He hath filled the hungry.**—It is interesting to note the manner in which the song of the Virgin anticipates the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Plain as reported by St. Luke (vi. 21). The words, like those of the beatitudes, have both their literal and their spiritual fulfilments. Both those who trusted in their earthly riches, and those who gloried in their fancied spiritual wealth, were sent empty away, while the "hungry," those who craved for a higher blessedness, were filled with the peace and righteousness which they sought.

(54) **He hath holpen his servant Israel.**—Up to this point the hymn has been one of personal thanks-

membrance of *his* mercy;[a] (55) as he spake to our fathers,[b] to Abraham, and to his seed for ever. (56) And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house. (57) Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son. (58) And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her. (59) And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. (60) And his mother answered and said, Not *so;* but he shall be called John. (61) And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. (62) And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. (63) And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all. (64) And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue *loosed*, and he spake, and praised God. (65) And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings[1]

[a] Jer. 31. 3, 20.

[b] Gen. 17. 19; Ps. 132. 11.

[1] Or, *things*.

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giving. Now we find that all the soul of the maiden of Nazareth is with her people. Her joy in the "great things" which God has done for her rests on the fact that they are "great things" for Israel also. The word which she uses for her people is that which expresses their relation to God as "the servant" of Jehovah, who is prominent in the later chapters of Isaiah, and is in Isa. xli. 8 identified with the nation, as elsewhere with the nation's Head (Isa. xlii. 1). One may see in the utterance of this hope already seen as realised, an indication of the early date of the hymn. At the time when St. Luke wrote, the rejection, not the restoration of Israel, was the dominant thought in men's minds.

**In remembrance.**—Literally, *in order to remember.* He helped Israel, as with the purpose to prove Himself not unmindful of His promised mercy.

(55) **As he spake to our fathers.** — As the sentence stands in English, the words "Abraham and his seed" seem in apposition with "forefathers," and to be added as explaining it. In the Greek, however, they are in a different connection, and belong to what had gone before, the construction being as follows: "To remember His mercy (as He spake unto our forefathers) to Abraham and his seed for ever." The mercy that had been shown to Abraham was, as it were, working even yet.

(56) **And Mary abode with her about three months.**—This brings the time so close to the birth of the Baptist that we might well deem it likely that the Virgin waited for it. On the other hand, the next verse seems almost to imply her previous departure. In any case, we may think of the three months as a time of much communion of heart and hope on the great things which God had done and was about to do for Israel.

(58) **Her neighbours and her cousins.**—Better, *her kindred,* as including a wider range of relations than that which comes within our definition of cousinship. The words imply that they had heard something of the vision in the Temple, and of what had been foretold of the future greatness of the child then born.

**Had shewed great mercy upon her.**—Literally, *had magnified His mercy.* The verb is the same as that which opens the *Magnificat,* and may well be looked upon as a kind of echo of it. The phrase is essentially a Hebrew one. (Comp. 1 Sam. xii. 24.)

(59) **They came to circumcise the child.**—The day of circumcision, as the admission of the child into God's covenant with his people, was, like the day of the baptism of infants among Christians, one on which relatives were invited to be present as witnesses, and was commonly followed by a feast. It was also, as baptism has come to be, the time on which the child received the name which was to bear its witness of the prayers of his parents for him, and of his personal relation to the God of his fathers.

**They called him . . .**—The Greek tense is strictly imperfect—*they were calling him.* The choice of the name commonly rested with the father, but the kinsfolk seem to have assumed that, in the dumbness of the father, the duty devolved on them, and they, according to a custom not uncommon, showed their respect for the father by choosing his name.

(60) **Not so; but he shall be called John.**—It is obvious from what follows that the writing-tablet had been in frequent use, and in this way the husband must have told the wife of the name which had been given by the angel.

(61) **There is none of thy kindred . . .**—The fact is not without interest, as probably showing that Zacharias did not come within the circle of those related to the Sadducean high priests, among whom (some thirty years later, it is true) we find that name (Acts iv. 6, v. 17).

(62) **They made signs to his father.**—It seems probable—almost, indeed, certain—from this, that Zacharias was deprived of the power of hearing as well as speech, and had passed into the condition of one who was naturally a deaf mute.

(63) **A writing table.**—The tablets in common use at this time throughout the Roman empire were commonly of wood, covered with a thin coat of wax, on which men wrote with the sharp point which has left its traces in our language, in the word "style," in its literal and figurative senses.

**His name is John.**—There is something emphatic in the use of the present tense. It was not a question to be discussed. The name had been given already.

**And they marvelled all.**—This confirms the view given above as to the previous deafness of Zacharias. There would have been no ground for wonder, had he heard the discussion. It was the coincidence that surprised them, hardly less than the utterance.

(64) **His tongue loosed.**—The verb is supplied by the translators because the one previously used applied strictly only to the mouth.

**He spake, and praised God.**—Probably, in substance, if not in words, as in the hymn that follows. The insertion of the two verses that follow seems to imply that some interval of time passed before its actual utterance.

(65) **All the hill country of Judæa.**—The district so designated included the mountain plateau to the

were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judæa. (66) And all they that heard *them* laid *them* up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him. (67) And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, (68) Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, (69) and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;[a] (70) as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets,[b] which have been since the world began: (71) that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; (72) to perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; (73) the oath which he sware to our father Abraham,[c] (74) that he would grant unto us, that we being

[a] Ps. 132. 17.
[b] Jer. 23. 5, & 30. 9.
[c] Gen. 22. 16.

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south of Jerusalem, which reaches its highest point at Hebron. (See Note on verse 39.) The whole verse describes the gradual spread of the report of the events from the immediate neighbourhood to the wider district of which it formed a part.

(66) **What manner of child shall this be!**—Better, *what shall this child be!* The question was not, what kind of child He should be, but what the child would grow to.

**And the hand of the Lord was with him.**—Some good MSS. give, "for the hand of the Lord," as giving the reason for the previous question. The "hand" implies, in the familiar language of the Old Testament (*e.g.,* Judg. ii. 15; 2 Chron. xxx. 12; Ezra vii. 9), what we more commonly call the "guidance" or the "providence" of God. The phrase was essentially a Hebrew one; one of the vivid anthropomorphic idioms which they could use more boldly than other nations, because they had clearer thoughts of God as not made after the similitude of men (Deut. iv. 12).

(67) **Was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied.**—The latter word appears to be used in its wider sense of an inspired utterance of praise (as, *e.g.,* in 1 Sam. xix. 20; 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25). The hymn that follows appears as the report, written, probably, by Zachariah himself, of the praises that had been uttered in the first moments of his recovered gift of speech. As such, we may think of it as expressing the pent-up thoughts of the months of silence. The fire had long been kindling, and at last he spake with his tongue.

(68) **Blessed be the Lord God of Israel.**—The whole hymn is, like the *Magnificat,* pre-eminently Hebrew in character, almost every phrase having its counterpart in Psalm or Prophet; and, like it, has come to take a prominent place in the devotions of the western Churches. Its first appearance, as so used, is in Gaul, under Cæsarius of Arles.

**Visited.**—Better, *looked upon, regarded.* The four centuries that had passed since the last of the prophets are thought of as a time during which the "face of the Lord" had been turned away from Israel. Now He looked on it again, not to visit them (as we more commonly use the word) for their offences, but to deliver.

**Redeemed his people.**—Better, *wrought redemption for His people.* The noun is formed from that which is translated "ransom" in Matt. xx. 28, where see Note. Its occurrence here is noticeable as showing how large an element the thought of deliverance through a ransom was in all the Messianic expectations of the time. (Comp. chap. ii. 38.) The past tense (in the Greek the aorist) is used by Zacharias as, in the joy of prophetic foresight, seeing the end of what had been begun. The next verse shows that he looked for this redemption as coming not through the child that had been born to him, but through the Son, as yet unborn, of Mary.

(69) **Hath raised up an horn of salvation.**—The symbolism of the *horn* comes from Ps. cxxxii. 17, where it is used of the representative of the House of David, and answers to the "Anointed" of the other clause of the verse. It originated obviously in the impression made by the horns of the bull or stag, as the symbols of strength. Here, following in the steps of the Psalmist, Zacharias uses it as a description of the coming Christ, who is to be raised up in the House of David.

(70) **His holy prophets, which have been since the world began.**—The words were probably more than a lofty paraphrase of the more usual language, "of old time," "of ancient days," and imply a reference to the great first Gospel, as it has been called, of Gen. iii. 15, as well as to those made to Abraham, who is the first person named as a prophet (Gen. xx. 7).

(71) **That we should be saved from our enemies.**—Literally, *salvation from our enemies,* in apposition with "the horn of salvation" of verse 69. The "enemies" present to the thoughts of Zacharias may have been the Roman conquerors of Judæa; the Idumæan House of Herod may have been among "those who hate."

(72) **To perform the mercy.**—The verse has been thought, and with apparent reason, to contain a reference, after the manner of the ancient prophets (comp. Isa. viii. 3; Mic. i. 10—15), to the name of the speaker, of his wife, and of his child. In "performing mercy," we find an allusion to John or Jochanan (="The Lord be merciful"); in "remembering His holy covenant," to the name Zacharias (="Whom Jehovah remembers"); in the "oath" of verse 73, to that of Elizabeth or Elisheba (="The oath of my God"). The play upon the words would, of course, be obvious in the original Hebrew (*i.e.,* Aramaic) of the hymn, which we have only in its Greek version.

**His holy covenant.**—The covenant is clearly that made with Abraham in Gen. xv. 18. In thus going back to that as the starting-point of the New Covenant which was to be made in Christ, Zacharias anticipates the teaching of St. Paul in Gal. iii. 15—19.

(73) **The oath.**—The noun is in apposition to the "covenant" of the preceding verse, though not grammatically in the same case with it.

(74) **That he would grant unto us . . .**—The form of the Greek indicates even more definitely than the English that this was the end to which the "covenant" and the "oath" had all along been pointing.

**Might serve him without fear.**—The service is that of worship as well as obedience. This was the end for which deliverance from enemies was but a means. Here, again, the form of the hope points to delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, (75) in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. (76) And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; (77) to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by[1] the remission of their sins, (78) through the tender mercy[2] of our God; whereby the dayspring[3] from on high hath visited us, (79) to give light to them that sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. (80) And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

CHAPTER II.—(1) And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all

[3] Or, *sun-rising*, or, *branch*, Num. 24. 17; Isa. 11. 1; Zech. 3. 8; Mal. 4. 2.

[1] Or, *for*.

Before the account called Anno Domini the fifth year.

[2] Or, *bowels of the mercy*.

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its early date. What prospect was there, when St. Luke wrote his Gospel, of any deliverance of the Jews from their earthly enemies? By that time, what was transitory in the hymn had vanished, and the words had gained the higher permanent sense which they have had for centuries in the worship of the Church of Christ.

(75) **In holiness and righteousness.**—The same combination is found, though in an inverted order, in Eph. iv. 24. "Holiness" has special reference to man's relations to God; "justice" to those which connect him with his fellow men; but, like all such words, they more or less overlap.

(76) **Thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest.**—Note the recurrence of the same divine name that had appeared in chap. i. 32, 35.

**Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord.**—The verse is, as it were, an echo of two great prophecies, combining the "going before Jehovah" of Mal. iii. 1, with the "preparing the way" of Isa. xl. 3.

(77) **To give knowledge of salvation.**—This, as the form of the Greek verb shows, was to be the object of the Baptist's mission. Men had lost sight of the true nature of salvation. They were wrapt in dreams of deliverance from outward enemies, and needed to be taught that it consisted in forgiveness for the sins of the past, and power to overcome sins in the future.

**The remission of their sins.**—Historically, this was the first utterance of the words in the Gospel records, and we may well think of it as having helped to determine the form which the work of the Baptist eventually took. It is interesting to compare it with our Lord's words at the Last Supper (Matt. xxvi. 28), and so to think of it as being the key-note of the whole work from the beginning to the end. Different in outward form as were the ministries of the Baptist and our Lord, they agreed in this.

(78) **Through the tender mercy.**—Literally, *on account of the bowels of mercy of our God.* After this manner the Jews spoke of what we should call "the heart" of God. The word was a favourite one with St. Paul, as in the Greek of 2 Cor. vii. 15; Phil. i. 8; ii. 1; Col. iii. 12. The pity that moved the heart of God is thought of, not as the instrument through which, but that on account of which, the work of the Baptist was to be accomplished.

**The dayspring from on high.**—The English word expresses the force of the Greek very beautifully. The dawn is seen in the East rising upward, breaking through the darkness. We must remember, however, that the word had acquired another specially Messianic association, through its use in the LXX. version as the equivalent for the "Branch," "that which springs upward," of Jer. xxiii. 5; Zech. iii. 8. Here the thought of the sunrise is prominent, and it connects itself with such predictions as, "The glory of the Lord hath risen upon thee" (Isa. lx. 1), "The sun of righteousness shall rise" (Mal. iv. 2). What had become a Messianic name is taken in its primary sense, and turned into a parable.

**Hath visited us.**—Better, *hath looked upon us.*

(79) **To give light to them that sit in darkness.**—The words are an echo of those of Isa. ix. 2, which we have already met with in Matt. iv. 16, where see Note. Here they carry on the thought of the sunrise lighting up the path of those who had sat all night long in the dark ravine, and whose feet were now guided into "the way of peace," that word including, as it always did, with the Hebrew, every form of blessedness.

(80) **And the child grew.**—We have no materials for filling up this brief outline of the thirty years that followed in the Baptist's life. The usual Jewish education, the observance of the Nazarite vow, the death of his parents while he was comparatively young, an early retirement from the world to the deserts that surrounded the western shores of the Dead Sea, study and meditation given to the Law and the Prophets, the steadfast waiting for the consolation of Israel, possible intercourse with the Essenes who lived in that region, or with hermit-teachers, like Banus, the master of Josephus (*Life*, c. 1), whose form of life was after the same fashion as his own: this we may surmise as probable, but we cannot say more. Whatever may have been the surroundings of his life, he entered upon his work in a spirit which was intensely personal and original.

## II.

(1) **There went out a decree.**—The passage that follows has given rise to almost endless discussion. The main facts may be summed up as follows:—(1) The word "taxed" is used in its older English sense of simple "registration," and in that sense is a true equivalent for the Greek word. The corresponding verb appears in Heb. xii. 23. It does not involve, as to modern ears it seems to do, the payment of taxes. The "world" (literally, the inhabited world, *οἰκουμένη*, *œcumenè*,—the word from which we form the word "œcumenical" as applied to councils) is taken, as throughout the New Testament, for the Roman empire. What Augustus is said to have decreed, was a general census. (2) It may be admitted that no Roman or Jewish historian speaks distinctly of such a general census as made at this time. On the other hand, the collection of statistical returns of this nature was an ever-recurring feature of the policy of Augustus. We read of such returns at intervals of about ten years during the whole period of his government. In B.C. 27, when he offered

the world should be taxed.[1] (2) (*And* this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) (3) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. (4) And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto the city of David,[a] which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) (5) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. (6) And so it was, that, while they were there,

[1] Or, *enrolled.*

[a] John 7. 42

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to resign, he laid before the Senate a *rationarium*, or survey of the whole empire. After his death, a like document, more epitomised—a *breviarium*—was produced as having been compiled by him. There are traces of one about this time made by the Emperor, not in his character as Censor, but by an imperial edict such as St. Luke here describes. (3) Just before the death of Herod, Josephus (*Wars*, i. 27, § 2; xxix. 2) reports that there was an agitation among the Jews, which led him to require them to take an oath of fidelity, not to himself only, but to the Emperor, and that 6,000 Pharisees refused to take it. He does not say what caused it, but the census which St. Luke records, holding out, as it did, the prospect of future taxation in the modern sense, sufficiently explains it. (4) It need hardly be said that the whole policy of Herod was one of subservience to the Emperor, and that though he retained a nominal independence, he was not likely to resist the wish of the Emperor for statistics of the population, or even of the property, of the province over which he ruled. (5) It may be noted that none of the early opponents of Christianity—such as Celsus and Porphyry—call the accuracy of the statement in question. St. Luke, we may add, lastly, as an inquirer, writing for men of education, would not have been likely to expose himself to the risk of detection by asserting that there had been such a census in the face of facts to the contrary.

(2) **And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.**—Here we come upon difficulties of another kind. Publicius Sulpicius Quirinus ("Cyrenius" is the Greek form of the last of the three names) was Consul B.C. 12, but he is not named as Governor of Syria till after the deposition of Archelaus, A.D. 6, and he was then conspicuous in carrying out a census which involved taxation in the modern sense; and this was the "taxing" referred to in Gamaliel's speech (Acts v. 37) as having led to the revolt of Judas of Galilee. How are we to explain the statement of St. Luke so as to reconcile it with the facts of history? (1) The word translated "first" has been taken as if it meant "before," as it is rendered in John i. 15, 30. This cuts the knot of the difficulty, but it is hardly satisfactory. This construction is not found elsewhere in St. Luke, and his manner is to refer to contemporary events, not to subsequent ones. It is hardly natural to speak of one event simply as happening before another, with no hint as to the interval that separated them, when that interval included ten or twelve years. (2) Our knowledge of the governors of Syria at this period is imperfect. The dates of their appointments, so far as they go, are as follows:—

B.C. 9.—Sentius Saturninus.
B.C. 6.—T. Quintilius Varus.
A.D. 6.—P. Sulpicius Quirinus.

It was, however, part of the policy of Augustus that no governor of an imperial province should hold office for more than five or less than three years, and it is in the highest degree improbable that Varus (whom we find in A.D. 7 in command of the ill-fated expedition against the Germans) should have continued in office for the twelve years which the above dates suggest. One of the missing links is found in A. Volusius Saturninus, whose name appears on a coin of Antioch about A.D. 4 or 5. The fact that Quirinus appears as a *rector*, or special commissioner attached to Caius Cæsar, when he was sent to Armenia (Tac. *Ann.* iii. 48), at some period before A.D. 4, the year in which Caius died—probably between B.C. 4 and 1—shows that he was in the East at this time, and we may therefore fairly look on St. Luke as having supplied the missing link in the succession, or at least as confirming the statement that Quirinus was in some office of authority in the East, if not as *præses*, or *proconsul* then as *quæstor* or Imperial Commissioner. Tacitus, however, records the fact that he triumphed over a Cilician tribe (the Homonadenses) after his consulship; and, as Cilicia was, at that time, attached to the province of Syria, it is probable that he was actually "governor" in the stricter sense of a term somewhat loosely used. St. Luke is, on this view, as accurate in his history here as he is proved to be in all other points where he comes in contact with the contemporary history of the empire, and the true meaning is found by emphasising the adjective, "This enrolment was the first under Quirinus's government of Syria." He expressly distinguishes it, *i.e.*, from the more memorable "taxing" of which Gamaliel speaks (Acts v. 37). St. Luke, it may be noted, is the only New Testament writer who uses the word. Justin Martyr, it may be added, confidently appeals to Roman registers as confirming St. Luke's statement that our Lord was born under Quirinus.

(3) **All went to be taxed.**—As a rule the practice in a Roman census was to register people in their place of residence; but this was probably modified in Palestine, in deference to the feelings of the people. After the death of Herod and the division of his kingdom, such a method as that implied here could hardly have been feasible, as the subjects of one tetrarchy would not have been registered as belonging to another, so that here again we have not an error, but a special note of accuracy.

(4) **Unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem.**—St. Luke's way of speaking of the town agrees with that in John vii. 42. It would appear to have been common. It had never ceased to glory in the fact that it had been David's city.

**Of the house and lineage of David.**—Others also —as, for example, Hillel, the great scribe—boasted of such a descent. What, on one hypothesis, was the special prerogative of Joseph was that the two lines of natural descent and inheritance—that through Nathan and that through Solomon—met in him. (See, however, Note on chap. iii. 23.) It is possible that the two nearly synonymous words, "house" and "lineage," may have been used as referring to this union.

(5) **To be taxed.**—Literally, *to register himself.*

**With Mary his espoused wife.**—Many of the best MSS. omit the substantive: "with Mary who was betrothed to him." The choice of the participle seems intended to imply the fact on which St. Matthew lays stress (Matt. i. 25). She went up with him, not the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. (7) And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. (8) And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch[1] over their flock by night. (9) And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. (10) And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. (11) For unto you is born this

[1] Or, *the night-watches.*

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necessarily because she too had to be registered at Bethlehem, but because her state, as "being great with child," made her, in a special sense, dependent on Joseph's presence and protection.

(7) **She brought forth her first-born son.**—On the question whether anything may be inferred from the word "first-born," as to the subsequent life of Mary and Joseph, see Note on Matt. i. 25.

**Wrapped him in swaddling clothes.**—After the manner of the East, then, as now, these were fastened tightly round the whole body of the child, confining both legs and arms.

**Laid him in a manger.**—A tradition found in the Apocryphal *Gospel of the Infancy* fixes a cave near Bethlehem as the scene of the Nativity, and Justin Martyr finds in this a fulfilment of the LXX. version of Isa. xxxiii. 16, "His place of defence shall be in a lofty cave." Caves in the limestone rocks of Judæa were so often used as stables, that there is nothing improbable in the tradition. The present Church of the Nativity has beneath it a natural crypt or cavern, in which St. Jerome is said to have passed many years, compiling his Latin translation (that known as the Vulgate) of the Sacred Scriptures. The traditional ox and ass, which appear in well-nigh every stage of Christian art in pictures of the Nativity, are probably traceable to a fanciful interpretation of Isa. i. 3, which is, indeed, cited in the Apocryphal Gospel ascribed to St. Matthew, as being thus fulfilled.

**There was no room for them in the inn.**—The statement implies that the town was crowded with persons who had come up to be registered there—some, perhaps, exulting, like Joseph, in their descent from David. The inn of Bethlehem—what in modern Eastern travel is known as a *khan* or *caravanserai*, as distinct from a hostelry (the "inn" of chap. x. 34)—offered the shelter of its walls and roofs, and that only. It had a memorable history of its own, being named in Jer. xli. 17, as the "inn of Chimham," the place of rendezvous from which travellers started on their journey to Egypt. It was so called after the son of Barzillai, whom David seems to have treated as an adopted son (2 Sam. xix. 37, 38), and was probably built by him in his patron's city as a testimony of his gratitude.

(8) **Shepherds abiding in the field.**—The fact has been thought, on the supposition that sheep were commonly folded during the winter months, to have a bearing adverse to the common traditional view which fixes December 25 as the day of the Nativity. At that season, it has been urged, the weather was commonly too inclement for shepherds and sheep to pass the night in the open air, and there was too little grass for pasturage. In summer, on the other hand, the grass on the hills is rapidly burnt up. The season at which the grass is greenest is that just before the Passover (Mark vi. 39; John vi. 10); and, on the whole, this appears the most probable date. The traditional season, which does not appear as such till the fourth century, may have been chosen for quite other reasons—possibly to displace the old *Saturnalia*, which coincided with the winter solstice. It is noticeable that the earliest Latin hymns connected with the festival of Christmas dwell on the birth as the rising of the Sun of Righteousness on the world's wintry darkness.

**Keeping watch.**—Literally, *keeping their night-watches*, as in Matt. xiv. 25. Who the shepherds were, or why they were thus chosen as the first to hear the glad tidings, we cannot know. Analogy suggests the thought that it was an answer to their prayers, the fulfilment of their hopes, that they, too, were looking for "the consolation of Israel." We may venture, perhaps, to think of the shepherds of Bethlehem as cherishing the traditions of David's shepherd-life, and the expectations which, as we know from Matt. ii. 5, John vii. 42, were then current throughout Judæa—that the coming of the Christ was not far off, and that Bethlehem was to witness His appearing, as thus gaining a higher spiritual receptivity than others. The statement in the Mishna that the sheep intended for sacrifice in the Temple were pastured in the fields of Bethlehem, gives a special interest to the fact thus narrated, and may, perhaps, in part, explain the faith and devotion of the shepherds. They had been rejoicing, at the Paschal season, over the spring-tide birth of the lambs of their flocks. They now heard of the birth of "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29).

(9) **Came upon them.**—The Greek verb, like the English, implies a sudden appearance. The form of the angel was probably, as in Mark xvi. 5, that of a young man in white apparel. (See Note on chap. i. 12). The wings of angels are, without exception, an after-thought of Christian imagination, those of Isa. vi. 2, Ezek. i. 6, Rev. iv. 8, being connected with the mysterious figures of the cherubim, the "living creatures" seen in apocalyptic vision.

**The glory of the Lord . . .**—The word suggests the thought of the Shechinah, or cloud of intolerable brightness, which was the token of the divine presence in the Tabernacle and the Temple (1 Kings viii. 10—11; Isa. vi. 1—3). (See Note on John i. 14.) Never before had there been such a manifestation to such men as these. What had been the privilege of patriarchs and priests was now granted to shepherds, and the first proclamation of the glad tidings was to those who were poor in their outward life as well as in spirit.

(10) **Fear not.**—It is worth noting that this is almost the normal accompaniment of the angelic manifestations in the Gospel (Matt. xxviii. 5—10; Luke i. 13, 30). They were intended to lessen, not to increase the dread which men feel on being brought into contact with the supernatural world.

**I bring you good tidings.**—The verb is formed from the word for glad tidings, which we translate as "gospel"—*i.e.*, good spell, good news.

**Which shall be to all people.**—Better, *to all the people.* The words point, in the first instance, to the day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. (12) And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. (13) And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, (14) Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. (15) And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds[1] said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. (16) And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. (17) And when they had seen *it*, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. (18) And all they that heard *it* wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. (19) But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart. (20) And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them. (21) And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child,[a] his name was called JESUS,[b] which was so named of the

Before the account called Anno Domini the fourth year.

[1] Gr. *the men the shepherds.*

[a] Gen. 17. 12.

[b] Matt. 1. 21.

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joy which shall be for Israel as God's "people," and as such distinguished from the other "nations" of the world. (Comp. chap. ii. 32.)

(12) **This shall be a sign unto you.**—The sign was not such in itself, but became so by its agreement with the prediction. It was something exceptional that a new-born infant should be found, not in a cradle, but in a manger; still stranger that that infant babe should be the heir of the House of David.

(13) **A multitude of the heavenly host.**—The phrase, or its equivalent, "the host of heaven," is common in the later books of the Old Testament, but is there used as including the visible "hosts" of sun, moon, and stars, which were worshipped by Israel (Jer. viii. 2; xix. 13; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 3). In this sense we find it in St. Stephen's speech (Acts vii. 42). Here it is obviously used of the angels of God as forming the armies of the great King. The great name of the Lord of Hosts, the Lord of Sabaoth, was probably intended to include both the seen and the unseen hosts, the stars in the firmament, and the angels in heaven. Its use in the New Testament is confined to these two passages. The Hebrew word is found, in Old Testament quotations, in Rom. ix. 29, Jas. v. 4.

(14) **Glory to God in the highest.**—The words would seem to have formed one of the familiar doxologies of the Jews, and, as such, reappear among the shouts of the multitude on the occasion of our Lord's kingly entry into Jerusalem (chap. xix. 38). The idea implied in the words "in the highest" (the Greek is plural), is that the praise is heard in the very heaven of heavens, in the highest regions of the universe.

**On earth peace, good will toward men.**—The better MSS. give, "on earth peace among men of good will"—*i.e.*, among men who are the objects of the good will, the approval and love of God. The other construction, "Peace to men of peace," which the *Christian Year* has made familiar, is hardly consistent with the general usage of the New Testament as to the word rendered "good will." The construction is the same as in "His dear Son," literally, *the Son of His Love*, in Col. i. 13. The word is one which both our Lord (Matt. xi. 25; Luke x. 21) and St. Paul use of the divine will in its aspect of benevolence, and the corresponding verb appears, as uttered by the divine voice, at the Baptism and Transfiguration (Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5). The words stand in the Greek, as in the English, without a verb, and may therefore be understood either as a proclamation or a prayer. The "peace on earth" has not unfrequently been connected, as in Milton's *Ode on the Nativity*, with the fact that the Roman empire was then at peace, and the gates of the Temple of Janus closed because there was no need for the power of the god to go forth in defence of its armies. It is obvious, however, that the "peace" of the angels' hymn is something far higher than any "such as the world giveth"—peace between man and God, and therefore peace within the souls of all who are thus reconciled. We may see a reference to the thought, possibly even to the words of the angelic song, in St. Paul's way of speaking of Christ as being Himself "our peace" (Eph. ii. 14).

(15) **The shepherds.**—Some, but not the best, MSS. give, as in the margin, "the men the shepherds," as if to emphasise the contrast between the "angels" who departed and the "men" who remained.

**This thing . . . . which the Lord hath made known.**—Literally, *this word*, or spoken thing. The choice of the Greek word seems to indicate that St. Luke was translating from the Aramaic.

(16) **They came with haste.**—The scene has naturally been a favourite subject of Christian art, and the adoration of the shepherds is, perhaps, implied, though not stated, in the narrative. The conventional accessories, however, of the ox and the ass, and the bright light glowing forth from the cradle, belong only to the legends of the Apocryphal Gospels. (See Notes on verse 7.)

(17) **They made known abroad . . .**—The fact must be borne in mind, as tending to the agitation which reached its height on the arrival of the Magi in Jerusalem. (See Note on Matt. ii. 3.)

(19) **Mary kept all these things.**—On the assumption that the whole narrative is traceable to the Virgin herself as its first author, these brief and simple touches as to her own feelings are of singular interest. She could not as yet understand all that had been said and done, but she received it in faith, and waited till it should be made clear. It was enough for her to know that her Child was, in some sense, the Son of God and the hope of Israel. The contrast between the simplicity and purity of St. Luke's narrative, and the fantastic and often prurient details of the Apocryphal *Gospel of the Infancy* is every way suggestive.

(21) **When eight days were accomplished . . .**—Hence the Feast of the Circumcision in the Church Calendar comes on January 1st, and so, not without

angel before he was conceived in the womb. (22) And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present *him* to the Lord; (23) (as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;[a]) (24) and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord,[b] A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons. (25) And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name *was* Simeon; and the same man *was* just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. (26) And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. (27) And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, (28) then took he

[a] Ex. 13. 2; Num. 18. 15.

[b] Lev. 12. 2, 6.

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design, perhaps, came to coincide with the beginning of the civil year. The contrast between this and the narrative of John's circumcision is striking. Here there are no friends and neighbours. Mary and Joseph were but poor strangers, in a city far from their own home. On the name of Jesus, see Note on Matt. i. 21. In St. Paul's words, "made of a woman, made under the law" (Gal. iv. 4), we may, perhaps, see a reference to a narrative with which his friendship with St. Luke must almost of necessity have made him familiar.

(22) **When the days of her purification . . .**—The primary idea of the law of Lev. xii. 1—6, would seem to have been that of witnessing to the taint of imperfection and sin attaching to every child of man, just as that of circumcision (its merely physical aspects being put aside) was that of the repression or control of one chief element of that sinfulness. Here neither was necessary; but the whole mystery of the birth was not as yet revealed to Mary, and therefore her act was simply one of devout obedience to the law under which she lived. The period of purification lasted for forty days from the birth, bringing the Feast of the Purification in our Church Calendar to February 2nd.

**To present him to the Lord.**—This, as the next verse shows, was only done according to the law of Ex. xiii. 2, when the firstborn child was a son. It was obviously a witness of the idea of the priesthood of the firstborn—a survival of the idea in practice, even after the functions of that priesthood had been superseded by the priesthood of the sons of Aaron. The firstborn of every house had still a dedicated life, and was to think of himself as consecrated to special duties. Comp. Heb. xii. 23 as giving the expansion of the thought to the whole company of those who are the "firstborn," as they are also the "firstfruits" of humanity (Jas. i. 18). As a formal expression of the obligation thus devolving on them, they had to be redeemed by the payment of five shekels to the actual Aaronic priesthood (Num. xviii. 15).

(24) **A pair of turtle doves.**—The law of Lev. xii. 8 allowed these to be substituted for the normal sacrifice of a lamb as a burnt-offering, and a pigeon or dove as a sin-offering, when the mother was "not able" to offer the former. We may see, therefore, in this fact, another indication of the poverty of Joseph and his espoused wife. The offering had, like all other sacrifices, to be made in the Temple. It seems all but certain that this visit to Jerusalem must have preceded the visit of the Magi. After that, it would have been perilous in the extreme, and the narrative of Matt. ii. implies an immediate departure for Egypt after they had left.

(25) **Whose name was Simeon.**—Some writers have identified the man thus described with a very memorable Simeon in the annals of the Jewish scribes, the son of Hillel, and the father of Gamaliel. He became president of the Sanhedrin, A.D. 13. Singularly enough, the Mishna, the great collection of expositions of the Law by the leading Rabbis, passes over his name altogether, and this suggests the thought that it may have done so because he was under a cloud, as believing in the prophet of Nazareth. On this assumption, his looking for the "consolation of Israel" may be connected on one side with the fact that he, too, was of the house of David, and on the other, with the cautious counsel of Gamaliel in Acts v. 38, 39. Against this view there is the fact that St. Luke's way of speaking leaves the impression that the Simeon of whom he speaks was of a very advanced age, waiting for his departure, and that he, who names Gamaliel's position (Acts v. 34), would hardly have passed over Simeon's. There was an aged Essene of this name living at the time of Herod's death, who rebuked Archelaus for marrying his brother's widow, and prophesied his downfall, and who more nearly fulfils the conditions; but the name was so common that all conjectures are very precarious.

**Devout.**—The Greek word expresses the cautious, scrupulous side of the religious life, and is therefore used always in the New Testament (Acts ii. 5; viii. 2; xxii. 12) of Jewish devoutness.

**The consolation of Israel.**—This is the first occurrence of this word. In its general use it included the idea of counsel as well as comfort. Here the latter is obviously the dominant thought. We cannot pass over the words without remembering that the Child of whom Simeon spoke called Himself the Comforter, and promised His disciples to send them another, who should bear the same name (John xiv. 16).

**The Holy Ghost was upon him.**—The words point to a special moment of inspiration, rather than a continuous guidance.

(26) **It was revealed unto him.**—The Greek word is the same as that rendered "warned" in Matt. ii. 12. It implies a divine oracular communication, but rests on a different idea from the "unveiling," which lies at the root of the word "reveal." The message in this case came clearly as an answer to prayers and yearnings.

**The Lord's Christ.**—The word retains all the fulness of its meaning—the Messiah, the Anointed of Jehovah.

(27) **He came by the Spirit.**—Better, as in Rev. i. 10, *in the Spirit*—*i.e.*, in a spiritual state in which the power of the Divine Spirit was the pervading element.

**The parents.**—Here, as in verses 33 and 48, St. Luke does not shrink from reproducing what was obviously the familiar phraseology of the household of him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, (29) Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: (30) for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, (31) which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; (32) a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. (33) And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. (34) And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this *child* is set for the fall and rising again[a] of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (35) (yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. (36) And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she

[a] Isa. 8. 14; Rom. 9. 32.

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Nazareth. In common life it is almost obvious that no other phraseology was possible.

**To do for him after the custom of the law.**—In common practice, the child would have been presented to the priest who offered the two turtle doves on behalf of the parents. In this instance Simeon, though not a priest (there is, at least, nothing but a legend in an Apocryphal Gospel to fix that character on him), takes on himself, standing by the priest, to receive the child as he was presented. This fits in, as far as it goes, with the idea of his having been an Essene, revered as possessing prophetic gifts. (See Notes on verse 25.)

(29) **Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.**—It is not expedient to alter the translation, but we have to remember that the central idea is that of the manumission of a slave. The word for Lord is not the usual *Kyrios,* but *Despotes*—a word but seldom used of God, and then almost always of the relation of a master and the slave who is such by inheritance or purchase (Acts iv. 24; 2 Pet. ii. 1; Jude verse 4; Rev. vi. 10, are the only other instances of its use). Simeon speaks as a slave who, through the night of long, weary years, has been standing on the watch-tower of expectation, and is at last set free by the rising of the Sun.

**According to thy word.**—The reference is to the oracle which had been uttered within his soul, and was now being fulfilled.

(30) **Mine eyes have seen thy salvation.**—The Greek word is not the usual feminine noun expressing the abstract idea of salvation, but the neuter of the adjective—that which brings or works out salvation. Its use here is probably determined by its appearance in the LXX. version of Isa. lii. 10, as quoted in chap. iii. 6. He saw in that infant child the means of deliverance for the world.

(31) **Before the face of all people.**—Literally, *of all peoples.* The word expresses the universality of the salvation which the next verse contemplates in its application to the two great divisions of the human family.

(32) **To lighten the Gentiles.**—Literally, *for a revelation to the Gentiles.* The idea is strictly that of the withdrawal of the "veil spread over all nations" of Isa. xxv. 7.

**The glory of thy people Israel.**—Here, again, the language is the natural utterance of the hope of the time, not the after-thought of later years. The Christ whom Israel had rejected was hardly "the glory of the people" when St. Luke wrote his Gospel.

(33) **And Joseph and his mother.**—The better MSS. give, *His father and his mother.* The present reading has apparently been substituted for this through feelings of reverence, but it has quite sufficient authority in verses 27 and 48.

(34) **This child is set for the fall and rising again.**—The words start from the thought of Isa. viii. 14, 15. The Christ is seen by Simeon as the stone on which some fall and are bruised (chap. xx. 18), while others plant their feet upon it and rise to a higher life. Primarily the clause speaks of the contrast between the two classes; but there is nothing to exclude the thought that some may first fall, and then, though sorely "bruised," may rise again. (Comp. Rom. xi. 11.)

**For a sign which shall be spoken against.**—Better, "a sign that *is* spoken against." In the choice of the phrase, we have again an echo from Isaiah (vii. 14). The child Immanuel was to be Himself a sign, even as Isaiah and his children were (Isa. viii. 18), but the sign was not to win acceptance. He was to endure the "contradiction" of sinners (Heb. xii. 3). There is probably a reference also to the words of Jehovah (Isa. lxv. 2) stretching forth his hands to a "gainsaying" people. The whole history of our Lord's ministry—one might almost say, of His whole after-work in the history of Christendom—is more or less the record of the fulfilment of Simeon's prediction.

(35) **A sword shall pierce through thy own soul also.**—The word used for "sword" here, occurs also in the Apocalypse (Rev. i. 16, ii. 12, *et. al.*), but not elsewhere in the New Testament. It was the large barbaric sword used by the Thracians, as distinguished from the shorter weapon of Roman soldiers. The announcement of the special sorrow that was to be the Virgin Mother's portion, comes as the sequel to "the sign that is spoken against," the antagonism which her Son would meet with. We may find fulfilments of it when the men of Nazareth sought to throw Him from the brow of their hill (Luke iv. 29); when she came, as in anxious fear, to check His teaching as the Pharisees charged Him with casting out devils through Beelzebub (Matt. xii. 46); when she stood by the cross, and heard the blasphemies and revilings of the priests and people (John xix. 26).

**That the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.**—This was conspicuously the result of our Lord's earthly ministry. It brought out latent good, as with publicans and harlots and robbers, rich and poor disciples, and the common people, who heard Him gladly; latent evil, as with Pharisees and scribes and rulers. And what was true of His work then, has been true in greater or less measure ever since. Whereever Christ is preached, there is a manifestation of the thoughts of men's hearts, of their secret yearning after righteousness, their secret bitterness against it. It may be noted, however, that the Greek word for "thought" is almost always used in the Greek with a shade of evil implied in it.

(36) **One Anna, a prophetess.**—The fact is in many ways remarkable. We find a woman recognised as a prophetess at a time when no man is recognised as a prophet. She bears the name of the mother of the founder of the School of the Prophets, identical with

was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; (37) and she *was* a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers night and day. (38) And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.[1] (39) And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. (40) And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. (41) Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.[a] (42) And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem

[a] Deut. 16. 1.

[1] Or, *Israel.*

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that which the legends of Apocryphal Gospels assign to the mother of the Virgin. She is named, as if it were a well-known fact, as having been the wife of Phanuel, and she is not of the tribe of Judah, but of Aser. That tribe, then, though belonging to the Ten that had been carried into exile by Shalmaneser (2 Kings xvii. 6), had not been altogether lost. Some, at least, of its members survived and cherished the genealogies of their descent, as one family of the neighbouring tribe of Naphthali are said to have done at Nineveh (Tobit i. 2). In that family also we find the name of Anna (Tobit i. 9).

**Seven years from her virginity.**—The words are emphasised (1) as expressing chastity prior to marriage, and (2) as excluding the thought of a second marriage.

(37) **A widow of about fourscore and four years.**—The better MSS. read, "*up to the point* of fourscore and four years," pointing to the fact that this was the duration of her widowhood. Assuming her to have been married at fifteen, this places her actual age at 106. She had lived through the whole century that preceded the birth of Christ, from the death of John Hyrcanus, and had witnessed, therefore, the conquest of Judæa by Pompeius, and the rise of the Herodian house.

**Which departed not from the temple.**—Probably some chamber within the precincts was assigned to her, as a reputed prophetess, as seems to have been the case with Huldah (2 Chron. xxxiv. 22). Her form, bent and worn, we may believe, with age and fastings, had become familiar to all worshippers at the Temple. She, too, was one of the devout circle who cherished expectations of the coming of the Christ.

(38) **Gave thanks.**—The word so translated occurs here only in the New Testament, but it is found with this meaning in the LXX. version of Ps. lxxix. 13.

**That looked for redemption in Jerusalem.**—The better MSS. give, "the redemption of Jerusalem," the phrase being the counterpart of the "consolation of Israel" in verse 25. Both the verbs "gave thanks" and "spake" imply continued, and not merely momentary action.

(39) **They returned into Galilee.**—Filling up the narrative from St. Matthew, we have to insert after the Presentation, the visit of the Magi, the massacre of the Infants, and the flight into Egypt. It seems probable that St. Luke was not acquainted with St. Matthew's narrative, nor St. Matthew with St. Luke's. Each wrote from what he heard, or found in previous existing narratives, more or less incomplete, and hence cannot readily be brought into harmony with the other. Here the parents return to Nazareth as their own city. In St. Matthew the return appears to be determined by their fears of Archelaus. It is possible that, though previously domiciled at Nazareth, they may have thought of settling at Bethlehem, and were deterred from doing so by the cruelty of Herod and his son.

(40) **Waxed strong in spirit.**—The better MSS. omit the last two words.

**Filled with wisdom.**—The Greek participle implies the continuous process of "being filled," and so conveys the thought expressed in verse 52, of an increase of wisdom. The soul of Jesus was human, *i.e.*, subject to the conditions and limitations of human knowledge, and learnt as others learn. The heresy of Apollinarius, who constructed a theory of the Incarnation on the assumption that the Divine Word (the *Logos* of St. John's Gospel) took, in our Lord's humanity, the place of the human mind or intellect, is thus, as it were, anticipated and condemned.

**The grace of God was upon him.**—The words seem chosen to express a different thought from that used to describe the growth of the Baptist. Here there was more than guidance, more than strength, a manifest outflowing of the divine favour in the moral beauty of a perfectly holy childhood.

On the history of the period between this and the next verses, see *Excursus* in the Notes on Matt. ii.

(41) **His parents went to Jerusalem.**—The law of Moses required the attendance of all males at the three feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles (Ex. xxiii. 17; Deut. xvi. 16). The dispersion of the Jews had, of course, relaxed the obligation for those who lived at a distance; but it was still more or less generally recognised by those who dwelt in Palestine, and the school of Hillel held the Passover to be binding upon women as well as men. The yearly journey to Jerusalem may therefore be taken as an indication of devout obedience, not without its bearing on the thoughts of the child who, during those visits, remained behind in the home at Nazareth.

(42) **When he was twelve years old.**—The stages of Jewish childhood were marked as follows:—At three the boy was weaned, and wore for the first time the fringed or tasselled garment prescribed by Num. xv. 38—41, and Deut. xxii. 12. His education began, at first under the mother's care. At five he was to learn the Law, at first by extracts written on scrolls of the more important passages, the Shemà or Creed of Deut. ii. 4, the Hallel or Festival Psalms (Pss. cxiv.—cxviii., cxxxvi.), and by catechetical teaching in school. At twelve he became more directly responsible for his obedience to the Law, and on the day when he attained the age of thirteen, put on for the first time the phylacteries which were worn at the recital of his daily prayer. (See Note on Matt. xxiii. 5.) It was accordingly an epoch of transition analogous to that which obtains among us at Confirmation. It was, therefore, in strict accordance with usage, with perhaps a slight anticipation of the actual day, that the "child Jesus" should, at the age of twelve, have gone up with His parents to Jerusalem. If the conjecture suggested in the Notes on verse 8, that the birth of our Lord coincided with the Paschal Season, be accepted, He may

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after the custom of the feast. (43) And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not *of it.* (44) But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance. (45) And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him. (46) And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. (47) And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. (48) And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. (49) And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be

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actually have completed His thirteenth year during the Feast; and so have become, in the fullest sense, one of the "children of the Law," bound to study it and know its meaning. This at least fits in with, and in fact explains, the narrative that follows. In the later Maxims of the Fathers (*Pirke Aboth*) two other stages of education were marked out. At ten, a boy was to enter on the study of the *Mischna* (= "comments"), or body of traditional interpretations of the Law; at eighteen, on that of the *Gemara* (= "completeness"), or wider collection of sayings or legends, which, with the *Mischna,* made up what is known as the *Talmud* ( = "learning," or "doctrine").

(43) **The child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem.**—The words do not imply that He intentionally stayed behind. If we deal with the history on its human side, the probable course of things was this:—The Passover Feast lasted seven days; on each of those days, after the first, we may well believe the "child Jesus" was seeking wisdom to do His Father's work at the hands of the appointed teachers who "sat in Moses' chair." This had become habitual. He went, as usual, when the Feast was over; but Joseph and Mary, instead of seeking Him there, took for granted that He had started with the other boys of the same age who had come from Nazareth. He was therefore left in the strange city by Himself, finding shelter for the night, probably, in the house where Joseph and Mary had lodged during the feast, and spending the day, as before, in drinking in the wondrous things of God's Law, and asking questions which showed that He demanded more than traditional or conventional explanations. His question, "Wist ye not . . . ?" implies that they ought to have known where He would be.

**Joseph and his mother knew not of it.**—The better MSS. read, *his parents,* the alteration having probably been made in the received text on the same ground as that in verse 33.

(44) **Supposing him to have been in the company.**—The company was probably a large one, consisting of those who had come up to keep the Passover from Nazareth and the neighbouring villages. It is not certain, but in the nature of things it is sufficiently probable, that the boys of such a company congregated together, and travelled apart from the others.

(46) **Sitting in the midst of the doctors.** — A chamber of the Temple was set apart as a kind of open free school. The "doctors" or teachers—famous "doctors of the Law" (Acts v. 34)—sat "in Moses' seat;" the older students on a low bench; the younger on the ground, literally "at the feet" of their instructor. The relation between master and scholar was often one of affectionate reverence and sympathy, and was expressed by one of the famous scribes in a saying worth remembering, "I have learnt much from the Rabbis, my teachers; I have learnt more from the Rabbis, my colleagues; but from my scholars I have learnt most of all." It is interesting to think that among the doctors then present may have been the venerable Hillel, then verging upon his hundredth year; his son and successor, Simeon; his grandson, the then youthful Gamaliel; Jonathan, the writer of the Chaldee Targum or Paraphrase of the Sacred Books; and Shammai, the rival of Hillel, who "bound" where the latter "loosed."

**Both hearing them, and asking them questions.**—The method of teaching was, we see, essentially and reciprocally catechetical. The kind of questions current in the schools would include such as, What is the great commandment of the Law? What may or may not be done on the Sabbath? How is such a precept to be paraphrased; what is its true meaning? As the Targum of Jonathan included the books of Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve Minor Prophets, the questions may probably have turned also on the meaning of prophecies, the expectations of the Christ, and the like. The legends of the Apocryphal Gospels make the wisdom of the child Jesus take a wide range over astronomy and other sciences.

(47) **At his understanding and answers.**—The first word seems to point to the discernment which showed itself in the questions as well as the answers. The egotism of Josephus leads him to speak of himself as having, at the age of fourteen—when he too had become "a child of the Law"—caused a like astonishment by his intelligence; so that the chief priests and principal men of the city used to come and consult him upon difficult questions in the interpretation of the Law (*Life,* c. i.). The fact is so far interesting as showing that the class of teachers retained the same kind of interest in quick and promising scholars.

(48) **Behold, thy father and I have sought.**—The latter clause expresses a continuous act, *We were seeking thee;* and our Lord uses the same tense in His answer.

(49) **Wist ye not . . . ?**—This is, as it were, the holy Child's defence against the implied reproach in His mother's question. Had they reflected, there need have been no seeking; they would have known what He was doing and where He was.

**About my Father's business.**—Literally, *in the things that are My Father's*—*i.e.,* in His work, the vague width of the words covering also, perhaps, the meaning "in My Father's house," the rendering adopted in the old Syriac version. The words are the first recorded utterance of the Son of Man, and they are a prophecy of that consciousness of direct Sonship, closer and more about my Father's business? (50) And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. (51) And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. (52) And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature,[1] and in favour with God and man.

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CHAPTER III.—(1) Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judæa, and Herod being tetrarch of

[1] Or, *age.*

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ineffable than that of any other of the sons of men, which is afterwards the dominant idea of which His whole life is a manifestation. We find in a Gospel in other respects very unlike St. John's, the germ of what there comes out so fully in such words as, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I also work" (John v. 17), "I and My Father are One" (John x. 30). The words are obviously emphasised as an answer to Mary's words, "Thy father." Subject unto His parents as He had been before and was afterwards, there was a higher Fatherhood for Him than that of any earthly adoption.

(50) **They understood not the saying.**—We are apt to think that they should have understood, and sceptical criticism has seen in this a contradiction to the previous history of the Annunciation and the Birth. Twelve years, however, of the life of childhood after the outward pattern of that of other children, may have dulled the impressions that had then been made; and even if they, in part, understood the words as referring to the marvel of His birth, they were still in the dark as to what He meant by being "about His Father's business." As it was, though it was the first flash of a greatness more than human, it was but momentary. It faded into "the light of common day," and life went on in its quiet and simple fashion as before. It is clear, at any rate, that the writer of the Gospel was not conscious of any inconsistency between the later and the earlier narratives of the childhood of the Christ.

(51) **Was subject unto them.**—There was, therefore, in the years that followed, no premature assumption of authority—nothing but the pattern of a life perfect in all its home-relationships. In such a household as that of the carpenter of Nazareth, this subjection must, in the nature of things, have involved much manual and menial work—a share in the toil alike of the workshop and the house.

**His mother kept all these sayings.**—The repetition of words like those of verse 19 is significant. The twelve years that had passed had not changed the character of the Virgin Mother. It was still conspicuous, more even than that of Joseph, for the faith which accepted what it could not understand, and waited patiently for the solution of its perplexities.

(52) **Jesus increased in wisdom and stature.**—Here again we have nothing but a normal orderly development. With Him, as with others, wisdom widened with the years, and came into His human soul through the same channels and by the same processes as into the souls of others—instruction, *e.g.*, in the school of Nazareth, and attendance at its synagogue—the difference being that He, in every stage, attained the perfection of moral and spiritual wisdom which belongs to that stage; there being in Him no sin or selfishness or pride, such as checks the growth of wisdom in all others. In striking contrast with the true record of the growth of the Son of Man, is that which grew out of the fantastic imaginations of the writers of the Apocryphal Gospels. There the child Jesus is ever working signs and wonders; fashions into shape Joseph's clumsy work; moulds sparrows out of clay, and claps His hands and bids them fly; strikes a playmate who offends Him with dumbness, and so on *ad nauseam.*

**In favour with God and man.**—This, it will be noted, is an addition to what had been stated in verse 40, and gives the effect while that gave the cause. The boy grew into youth, and the young man into manhood, and the purity and lowliness and unselfish sympathy drew even then the hearts of all men. In that highest instance, as in all lower analogies, men admired holiness till it became aggressive, and then it roused them to an antagonism bitter in proportion to their previous admiration. On the history of the eighteen years that followed, see *Excursus* on Matt. ii.

### III.

(1) **Now in the fifteenth year . . .**—The opening of the main narrative is characteristic of St. Luke's desire to follow in the footsteps of regular historians, and to name the rulers of any regions that were affected, directly or indirectly, by the events which he narrates.

**Tiberius Cæsar.**—He had succeeded Augustus A.D. 14, so that we get the date A.D. 29 for the commencement of the Baptist's ministry. The history of his rule lies outside the scope of this Commentary; but the rise of the city Tiberias, and the new name—the sea of Tiberias—given to the lake of Galilee, may be noted as evidence of the desire of the Tetrarch Antipas to court his favour.

**Pontius Pilate.**—See Note on Matt. xxvii. 2. He had entered on his office of Procurator in A.D. 26.

**Herod being tetrarch of Galilee.**—The Tetrarch was commonly known as Antipas (a shortened form of Antipater) to distinguish him from his brothers. He had succeeded his father on his death, B.C. 4 or 3. The date of his birth is uncertain, but he must have been over fifty at this time. He was deposed A.D. 39.

**Philip tetrarch of Ituræa.**—Not the Philip whose wife Antipas had married (see Note on Matt. xiv. 3), and who was the son of Mariamne, but his half-brother, the son of a Cleopatra of Jerusalem. On the division of Herod's kingdom he received Batanæa, Trachonitis, Auranitis, and a district near Jamnia, and governed with equity and moderation. The city of Cæsarea Philippi, on the site of Paneas, was built by him (see Note on Matt. xvi. 13), and he raised the eastern Bethsaida to the rank of a city under the name of Julias. Our Lord's ministry brought Him into the region under Philip's rule just before the Transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 1).

Ituræa offers a link between the Old Testament and the New. It was named after Jetur (pronounced *Yetur*) a son of Ishmael (Gen. xxv. 15). Aristobulus conquered it about B.C. 55, and offered its inhabitants the choice of exile or Judaism. Some submitted, others found a refuge in the slopes of Hermon. When conquered by Augustus, B.C. 20, it was given to Herod the Great, and was bequeathed by him to Philip. The region lay between Hermon, Trachonitis, Gaulanitis, Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituræa and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, (2) Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. (3) And he came into all the country about Jordan,[a] preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; (4) as it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness,[b] Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. (5) Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways *shall be* made smooth; (6) and all flesh shall see the salvation of God. (7) Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers,[c] who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? (8) Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of [1] repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. (9) And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. (10) And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? (11) He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats,[d] let him impart to him that hath none; and he that

[c] Matt. 3. 7.

[1] Or, *meet for.*

[a] Matt. 3. 1.

[b] Isa. 40. 3.

[d] Jas. 2. 15; 1 John 3. 17.

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and the plain of Damascus, and consisted generally of basaltic rock. The old name appears in the modern *Jedur.*

**Trachonitis.**—This, like Ituræa, is mentioned here, and here only, in the Bible. It corresponds with the Argob of Deut. iii. 14, and with the modern *El Lejah.* Both the Hebrew and the Greek names point to the rocky character of the region with its caves and cliffs. It was conquered, like Ituræa, by Augustus, and by him given to Herod. It lay somewhat to the south of that province and to the north of the *Hauran.*

**Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene.**—The district so named (probably from *Abel,* the Hebrew for a "grassy meadow") lay on the eastern slope of the range of the Anti-Libanus, and was watered by the Barada. The name of Lysanias appears as its ruler from the time of Antony and Cleopatra to that of Claudius, and passed probably, therefore, through two or three generations. An inscription, with his name as tetrarch, was found by Pococke in the seventeenth century. There is no reason for thinking that our Lord's journeyings ever extended thus far, but St. Luke's may very probably have done so, and this may account for his mentioning the district and its ruler.

(2) **Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests.**—Strictly speaking, there could be only one high priest, and the office was filled at this time by Caiaphas. Annas had been appointed by the Roman Procurator Quirinus, A.D. 7. In A.D. 14, he had to give way to Ishmael, who was appointed by Gratus successor to Quirinus; then followed Eleazar and Simon, and then, in A.D. 25, Joseph Caiaphas, who had married the daughter of Annas (John xviii. 13). It was natural that this relationship should involve the restoration, as far as possible, of his old dignity, and either as the *Nasi* or President of the Sanhedrin, or as the *Sagan* or deputy of the high priest, he may have acted as a coadjutor, as in our Lord's trial, and come to be spoken of as still high priest. Five of his sons, it may be noted, filled the Pontifical office in succession. In Acts iv. 6, he is named as distinctly *the* high priest. In St. John, as above, he shares the judicial authority with Caiaphas. St. Matthew and St. Mark do not name him.

**Unto John the son of Zacharias.**—This description of the Baptist is peculiar to St. Luke.

(3—9) **And he came into all the country . . .**—The words paint the mission-work of John somewhat more vividly than those of St. Matthew and St. Mark, who represent the people flocking to Him from Jerusalem and Judæa. The two facts together complete the picture.

**The baptism of repentance.**—See Notes on Matt. iii. 1—11, and Mark i. 4—6. In his description of the Baptism, St. Luke agrees verbally with the latter.

(4) **The voice of one crying in the wilderness.**—See Note on Matt. iii. 3.

(5) **Every valley shall be filled.**—The fuller citation by St. Luke, as compared with the other Gospels, is interesting, and suggests the thought that he was led to see in the manifold aspects of the Baptist's ministry a fulfilment of this part of the prophecy. The "valley" was filled, when lowly and penitent souls received the assurance of pardon; "mountains and hills" were "brought low" when the pride of Pharisees and Sadducees was rebuked; the "crooked made straight" when Publicans learnt to be honest; the "rough places smooth" when soldiers were taught to do violence to no man. The imagery is, of course, taken from the work of pioneers levelling a road for the march of a great king.

(6) **The salvation of God.**—The same word is used as in chap. ii. 30, where see Note.

(7) **Then said he to the multitude.**—Better, *multitudes.* In St. Matthew the words "Generation" (or *brood*) "of vipers" are related, probably with greater accuracy, as having been addressed specifically to the Pharisees and Sadducees. On the question itself, see Note on Matt. iii. 7.

(10) **And the people asked him . . .**—The questions that follow are peculiar to St. Luke. They are interesting as showing that the work of the Baptist was not that of a mere preacher of repentance. Confession of sins followed naturally on the part of the penitents; that was followed, as naturally, by guidance for the conscience. St. Luke, as a physician of the soul, may well have delighted to place on record this example of true spiritual therapeutics.

(11) **He that hath two coats.**—The remedy, in this case, was simple and practical. Selfishness was the root of evil. It was to be conquered not by religious emotions only, but by acts of unselfishness.

hath meat, let him do likewise. (12) Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? (13) And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. (14) And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man,[1] neither accuse *any* falsely; and be content with your wages.[2]

(15) And as the people were in expectation,[3] and all men mused[4] in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not; (16) John answered, saying unto *them* all, I indeed baptize you with water;[a] but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: (17) whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable. (18) And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

(19) But Herod the tetrarch,[b] being reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, (20) added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison. (21) Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized,[c] and praying, the heaven was opened, (22) and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven which said, Thou art my beloved son; in thee I am well pleased.

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[b] Matt. 14. 3.

[1] Or, *Put no man in fear.*

[2] Or, *allowance.*

[3] Or, *in suspense.*

[4] Or, *reasoned,* or, *debated.*

A.D. 27.

[c] Matt. 3. 13.

[a] Matt. 3. 11.

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**He that hath meat.**—The Greek noun is plural, and includes all forms of food.

(12) **Then came also publicans.**—The other Gospels do not mention the presence of this class in their narratives of the Baptist's work, but it is implied in Matt. xxi. 32.

(13) **Exact no more.**—Under the "farming" system of taxation adopted by the Roman empire, this was the besetting temptation of all collectors employed in it, and it led naturally to the evil repute which attached, not in Judæa only, to the name of publican. (See Note on chap. xix. 2.)

(14) **And the soldiers likewise . . .**—The Greek word has not the definite article, and is a participle. Better, *and soldiers, as they were marching.* The words probably point to the troops of Antipas on their way down the valley of the Jordan to attack Aretas (comp. Notes on 2 Cor. xi. 32), the father of the Tetrarch's divorced wife, who had declared war on account of the wrong thus done to his daughter. Roman soldiers were not likely to have come to the Baptist's preaching.

**Do violence to no man.**—The Greek word was the exact equivalent of the Latin *concutere* (whence our "concussion"), and was applied to the violence which was used by irregular troops to extort money or provisions.

**Neither accuse any falsely.**—The word occurs again in the confession of Zacchæus (chap. xix. 8). It is supposed to have been primarily used of those who informed against the export of figs from Attica at a time when that trade was prohibited. They were known, it is said, as "sycophants," though no actual instance of this use of the word is extant. The word came, in course of time, to be applied to informers generally, and then, in its modern sense, to those who court the favour of princes by informing against others—the *delatores,* who at this time were so conspicuous in the imperial court, on which that of the Tetrarch's had been modelled.

**Be content with your wages.**—Better, *pay.* The word meant primarily the "rations" of a soldier, and then the money received in lieu of rations. As used in the New Testament, the idea of pay for soldier's work as distinct from the wages of a labourer, is almost always connected with it. (Comp. Rom. vi. 23; 1 Cor. ix. 7.)

(15) **All men mused in their hearts . . .**—The surmise which St. Luke thus records is not given by St. Matthew or St. Mark, but it agrees with what we find in St. John (i. 19), and explains the reference to the "mightier" one which in the other Gospels comes in somewhat abruptly. On the answer itself, see Notes on Matt. iii. 11, 12. St. Luke's report includes the chief features of those of St. Matthew and St. Mark, but it omits the characteristically vivid "stooping down" to unloose which we find in the latter.

(17) **He will throughly purge . . .**—The better MSS. give, *throughly to purge,* and *to gather.*

(18) **Many other things . . .**—This lay, more or less, in the nature of the case; but St. Luke's is the only record which lays stress on the wider range of the Baptist's teaching. The sources of information which supplied him with verses 10—14, probably brought to his knowledge much of the same character; but what he records, in common with the other two Evangelists, was, as it were, the text and burden of it all.

(19—20) **But Herod the tetrarch.**—See Notes on Matt. xiv. 3—5. St. Luke's anticipation of the close of the Baptist's history supplies a curious instance of an arrangement which was obviously deliberate. It seemed to him better to complete the account of the Baptist's ministry here than to bring in the account of the imprisonment as an episode later on. It coincides in part with St. John's arrangement (John iii. 24).

**For all the evils which Herod had done.**—The marriage with Herodias is conspicuous as the Tetrarch's one great crime; but the sensual, crafty character of the man, with his fox-like nature (chap. xiii. 32), must have made any preaching of "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come" as much a personal rebuke to him as it was to Felix (Acts xxiv. 25), and caused him also to tremble.

(21—22) **Now when all the people were baptized.**—See Notes on Matt. iii. 13—17. St. Luke's account is the shortest of the three first Gospels, but it adds here, as afterwards in his report of the Transfiguration, the fact that our Lord was "praying" at the time of the divine attestation to His Sonship. (See *Introduction.*)

(22) **In a bodily shape.**—The words are peculiar to St. Luke, and tend to confirm the traditional symbolism which finds in the dove the emblem of the

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(23) And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was *the son* of Heli, (24) which was *the son* of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi, which was *the son* of Melchi, which was *the son* of Janna, which was *the son* of Joseph, (25) which was *the son* of Mattathias, which was *the son* of Amos, which was *the son* of Naum, which was *the son* of Esli, which was *the son* of Nagge, (26) which was *the son* of Maath, which was *the son* of Mattathias, which was *the son* of Semei, which was *the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Juda, (27) which was *the son* of Joanna, which was *the son* of Rhesa, which was *the son* of Zorobabel, which was *the son* of Salathiel, which was *the son* of Neri, (28) which was *the son* of Melchi, which was *the son* of Addi, which was *the son* of Cosam, which was *the son* of Elmodam, which was *the son* of Er, (29) which was *the son* of Jose, which was *the son* of Eliezer, which was *the son* of Jorim, which was *the son* of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi, (30) which was *the son* of Simeon, which

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Holy Spirit. They, at least, fall in naturally with this view; but the other construction, that the Holy Spirit descended, after the manner of a dove, first hovering and then resting, in a bodily form (undefined) of some sort, is, at least, not excluded.

(23) **Began to be about thirty years of age.**—At this age the Levites entered on their full work (Num. iv. 23, 30, 35), a kind of probationary period beginning at twenty-five (Num. viii. 24) or even, in later times, when their work was lighter, at twenty (1 Chron. xxiii. 27). No age was fixed for the beginning of the priesthood, nor of the prophet's work; but it may fairly be inferred that thirty was looked on as the time when manhood reached its completeness, and we may therefore believe that our Lord waited in patient humility till that age had been attained before entering on the work of His public ministry.

**Being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph.**—We have here to deal with the many questions which rise out of a comparison of this genealogy with that in Matt. i. It is a subject on which volumes have been written. Here it will be enough to sum up the results of previous inquiries.

(1) In St. Matthew, Joseph appears as the son of Matthan, the grandson of Jacob; here as the son of Heli, and grandson of Matthat.

(2) As we go further back the names are all different till we come to Zerubbabel; and the list in St. Luke from Zerubbabel to Joseph contains twenty names, inclusive, while those in St. Matthew are only thirteen.

(3) Going upward from Zerubbabel and Salathiel, which are common to both genealogies, we come again across a different succession—St. Luke leading us to Nathan as the son of David, and St. Matthew to Solomon. Here again we have in St. Luke twenty-two generations from Salathiel to David, inclusive, while in St. Matthew we have but sixteen.

(4) From David to Abraham there is a general agreement, the only variation being that, in some MSS., the names of Arni and Admei in St. Luke (verse 33) replace the Aram of St. Matthew.

(5) Here St. Matthew's record stops, while St. Luke continues to trace the succession back to Adam—his list of names agreeing with those in Gen. xi. 10 and 1 Chron. i. 24—27 as far as Noah, and Gen. v. and 1 Chron. i. 1—4 from Noah to Adam, with the exception of the insertion of a Cainan between Arphaxad and Salah in the former section.

Each of these points calls for separate consideration, the first being obviously the most important.

(1) The difficulty presented here admits of at least three explanations. (*a*) Joseph may have been the son of Jacob by birth, and of Heli by adoption, or conversely. (*b*) Jacob and Heli may have been half brothers—sons of the same mother—by different fathers, Matthan and Matthat, or these two may be different forms of the name of the same person, and one of the two brothers may have died without issue, and the other married his widow to raise up seed unto his brother. On either of these assumptions, both the genealogies give Joseph's descent. This would be sufficient, as St. Matthew's record shows, to place the son of Mary in the position of the heir of the house of David. We have, however, on this theory, to account for the fact that two different genealogies were treasured up in the family of Joseph; and the explanation commonly offered is natural enough. St. Matthew, it is said, gives the line of kingly succession, the names of those who were, one after another, the heirs of the royal house; St. Luke that of Joseph's natural parentage, descending from David as the parent stock, but through the line of Nathan, and taking by adoption its place in the royal line when that had failed. The fact that from David to Salathiel St. Matthew gives us the line of kings, and St. Luke that of those who were outside the line, is so far in favour of this hypothesis. (*c*) A third and, as it seems to the present writer, more probable view is, that we have here the genealogy, not of Joseph, but of Mary, the words "being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph" being a parenthesis, and the first link being Jesus (the heir, and in that sense, son, of Heli). On this hypothesis, the Virgin, as well as Joseph, was of the house and lineage of David; and our Lord was literally, as well as by adoption, "of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. i. 3), on the mother's side through the line of Nathan, on the reputed father's through that of Solomon. This view has at least the merit of giving a sufficient reason for the appearance of the two different genealogies. Everything too, as we have seen in the *Introduction*, points to the conclusion that the materials for the first three chapters of St. Luke's Gospel came to him through the company of devout women who gathered round the mother of Jesus; and if so, what more natural than that they should have preserved and passed on to him the document on which she rested her claim to be of David's lineage?

(2) The difference in the number of names presents no real difficulty. We have seen (Note on Matt. i. 9) that St. Matthew omits three names in the list of kings in order to adapt it to the *memoria technica* of fourteen names in each group, and what he did in one case he may well have done in another for the same reason.

was *the son* of Juda, which was *the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Jonan, which was *the son* of Eliakim, (31) which was *the son* of Melea, which was *the son* of Menan, which was *the son* of Mattatha, which was *the son* of Nathan, which was *the son* of David, (32) which was *the son* of Jesse, which was *the son* of Obed, which was *the son* of Booz, which was *the son* of Salmon, which was *the son* of Naasson, (33) which was *the son* of Aminadab, which was *the son* of Aram, which was *the son* of Esrom, which was *the son* of Phares, which was *the son* of Juda, (34) which was *the son* of Jacob, which was *the son* of Isaac, which was *the son* of Abraham, which was *the son* of Thara, which was *the son* of Nachor, (35) which was *the son* of Saruch, which was *the son* of Ragau, which was *the son* of Phalec, which was *the son* of Heber, which was *the son* of Sala, (36) which was *the son* of Cainan, which was *the son* of Arphaxad, which was *the son* of Sem, which was *the son* of Noe, which was *the son* of Lamech, (37) which was *the son* of Mathusala, which was *the son* of Enoch, which was *the son* of Jared, which was *the son* of Maleleel, which was *the son* of Cainan, (38) which was *the son* of Enos, which was *the son* of Seth, which was *the son* of Adam, which was *the son* of God.

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CHAPTER IV.—(1) And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from

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(3) There is, in the appearance in St. Matthew's list of Jeconias (as in 1 Chron. iii. 17), and in St. Luke's of Neri, as the father of Salathiel, a problem to be solved; but an adequate, though necessarily conjectural, solution is not far to seek. To assume that the Salathiel of the one list is not identical with that in the other, is to cut the knot instead of disentangling it. But it may be noticed that in the earlier registers connected with the name of the historical Salathiel, father of the Zerubbabel who was the leader of the Jews on their return from Babylon, there is an obvious complication. In 1 Chron. iii. 19, Zerubbabel is the son of Pedaiah, the brother of Salathiel. The language in Jer. xxii. 30 at least suggests the thought that Jeconiah died without an heir. What seems probable accordingly is that the royal line descended from Solomon, expired in Jeconiah, and that Salathiel, the son of Neri, the representative of the line of Nathan, took his place in the line of inheritance. It is not without significance that in the contemporary prophecy of Zechariah, the house of Nathan appears, for the first time in the history of Judah, as invested with a special pre-eminence (Zech. xii. 12). The difference in the number of the names admits of the same explanation as before.

(4) The comparative slight variation here is such as may easily have arisen in the process of transcription from an Aramaic document into Greek. The received reading, "Aram," was probably a correction in order to bring the genealogy into agreement with St. Matthew's.

(5) (*a*) The fact that the genealogy goes back to Adam may have been originally in the document which St. Luke translated, without any special significance; but it at least falls in with the whole character of his Gospel as intended to set forth the universality of the gospel, to prepare the way for the truth of the brotherhood of mankind in Christ. It represented Christ as the second Adam, as St. Matthew's genealogy represented Him as the heir of Abraham. (*b*) The insertion of Cainan between Salah and Arphaxad agrees with the text of all known copies of the Greek version of Gen. xi. This may imply an original Hebrew text older than that which we now possess; but, on the other hand, as all existing copies of the LXX. version were made for Christian use, it is possible that the name may have been inserted to bring the genealogy in Gen. xi. into agreement with that given by St. Luke. The name does not appear in this place in the Vulgate, Syriac, or Samaritan versions of the Pentateuch, and in one of the best MSS. of the New Testament (the *Codex Bezæ*) it is wanting here. Further than this we cannot go in dealing with a question which, after all, is infinitesimally small in itself, and has no direct bearing on any graver issues.

It may be noted, lastly, that genealogies, such as those given by St. Matthew and St. Luke, were common in almost every Jewish family. The books of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, compiled after the return from Babylon, show that they existed then. Josephus transcribes his own pedigree, from the time of the Asmonæan, or Maccabean, priest-rulers, from public registers (*Life*, c. i.), and states (*against Apion*, i. 7) that not in Judæa only, but in Alexandria and Babylon, and other cities, wherever the Jews were settled, such registers were kept of the births and marriages of all belonging to the priesthood; that copies were sent to Jerusalem; that the registers went back for 2,000 years. The prevalence of the name Cohen ( = priest) among modern Jews indicates the same care in the priestly line. The members of the house of David were hardly likely to be less careful in preserving records of their descent than those of the house of Aaron. Hillel the scribe, *i.e.*, was known to be of the lineage of David, and must have had evidence of some kind to prove it. So, at a later time, the Princes of the Captivity who ruled over the Jews of Babylonia, claimed their allegiance as sons of David.

(38) **Which was the son of God.**—The whole form of the genealogy leads us to apply these words to Adam. Humanity as such, as the result of an immediate creative act, was the offspring of God (Acts xvii. 28), and the words of the angel (chap. i. 35) imply that it was because the human nature of our Lord originated in a like creative act, that it was entitled, not less than by its union with the Sonship of the Eternal Word, to be called the Son of God. What was true of the second Adam was true also partly, though in different measure, of the first.

## IV.

(1—13) **Being full of the Holy Ghost.** — See Notes on Matt. iv. 1—11. The words used by St. Luke describe the same fact as those used by St.

Jordan,[a] and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, (2) being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. (3) And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. (4) And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. (5) And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. (6) And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. (7) If thou therefore wilt worship me,[1] all shall be thine. (8) And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. (9) And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: (10) for it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: (11) and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. (12) And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. (13) And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

A.D. 30.

(14) And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. (15) And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

A.D. 31.

(16) And he came to Nazareth,[b] where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up

[a] Matt. 4. 1.

[1] Or, *fall down before me.*

[b] Matt. 13. 54.

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Matthew and St. Mark, and agree with the Spirit given "not by measure" of John iii. 34.

(3) **Command this stone.**—The singular form is somewhat more vivid than the plural, "these stones," in St. Matthew.

(5) **The kingdoms of the world.**—St. Luke uses the word (literally, *the inhabited world*) which was commonly used as co-extensive with the Roman empire. On the difference in the order of the temptations, see Note on Matt. iv. 5.

**In a moment of time.**—The concentration of what seems an almost endless succession of images into the consciousness of a moment is eminently characteristic of the activity of the human soul in the state of ecstasy or vision.

(6) **For that is delivered unto me.**—Better, *hath been delivered unto me.* The specific assertion of the usurped dominion, though implied in St. Matthew, is in its form peculiar to St. Luke. (See Note on Matt. iv. 9.) The notion that any such delegated sovereignty had been assigned to the Tempter, either before or after his fall from his first estate, has, it need hardly be said, no foundation in Scripture. It asserts that "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof" (Ps. xxiv. 1); and the claim of the Tempter was a lying boast, resting only on the permitted activity and temporary predominance of evil in the actual course of the world's history.

(13) **When the devil had ended all the temptation.**—Better, *had completed every kind of temptation.* The three trials were each typical in character, and taken together they made up the cycle of those to which our Lord's human nature was then open.

**For a season.**—*Till a* [convenient] *season*—*i.e.*, till the close of the great work, the time of the power of darkness (chap. xxii. 53), when the prince of this world again came (John xiv. 30), and, trying then the power of suffering, as he had before tried the allurements of the world, found that he was foiled in the latter temptation as he had been in the earlier.

(14) **Returned in the power of the Spirit.**—The phrase, which meets us again in Rom. xv. 13, indicates a new phase of the life of the Son of Man, a change from its former tenor as striking as that which passed over the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, when new powers of thought and utterance were developed which had before been latent.

(15) **Being glorified.**—The dawn of the day of work was bright. Wonder, admiration, glory, waited on the new Prophet. Soon, however, when His preaching involved a demand on men's faith and obedience beyond what they had expected, it roused opposition, and the narrative that follows is the first stage of that antagonism.

Again, as in St. Matthew, the reader must be reminded that the narrative of John ii.—v. comes in between the Temptation and the commencement of the Galilean ministry.

(16) **And he came to Nazareth.**—The narrative that follows, signally interesting in itself, has also the special interest of being peculiar to St. Luke. We may naturally think of it as having come to him from the same group of informants as those from whom he derived his narrative of the Infancy. (See *Introduction.*) He may have journeyed from Cæsarea to Nazareth during St. Paul's imprisonment in the former city, and obtained his information on the spot. It is clear that our Lord did not begin His ministry at Nazareth. He came there when His fame was, in some measure, at least, already established.

**As his custom was.**—This, then, had been His wont before He entered on His work. Children were admitted to the synagogue at the age of five. At thirteen attendance was obligatory. It was open to any man of reputed knowledge and piety, with the sanction of the ruler of the synagogue, to read the lessons (one from the Law and one from the Prophets), and our Lord's previous life had doubtless gained the respect of that officer. Up to this time, it would seem, He had confined Himself to reading. Now He came to preach, for to read. (17) And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, (18) The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me,[a] because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, (19) to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. (20) And he closed the book, and he gave *it* again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. (21) And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. (22) And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son? (23) And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in

[a] Isa. 61. 1.

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after an absence possibly of some months, with the new power that had already made Him famous. The work of preaching also was open to any person of adequate culture, who had a "word of exhortation" to address to the worshippers. (Comp. Acts xiii. 15.) The constitution of the synagogue in thus admitting the teaching functions of qualified laymen, was distinctly opposed to the root-idea of sacerdotalism.

(17) **The book of the prophet Esaias.**—The Law—*i.e.*, the Pentateuch—was commonly written on one long roll. The other books, in like manner—singly or combined, according to their length—were written on rolls of parchment, and were unrolled from the cylinder to which they were fastened. Here, it is clear, Isaiah formed a roll by itself. It is a natural inference from the fact that it was given to Him, that it contained the prophetic lesson for the day. In the calendar of modern Jews, the lessons from Isaiah run parallel with those from Deuteronomy. The chapter which He read stands as the second lesson for the day of Atonement. We cannot prove that the existing order obtained in the time of our Lord's ministry, but everything in Judaism rests mainly on old traditions; and there is therefore nothing extravagant in the belief that it was on the day of Atonement that the great Atoner thus struck what was the key-note of His whole work.

**When he had opened the book.**—Better, *when He had unrolled.*

(18) **The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.**—The passage that follows reproduces, with a few unimportant variations, the LXX. version of Isa. lxi. 1, 2. The words "to heal the broken-hearted" are not in the best MSS. "To set at liberty them that are bruised" is not found in the present text of Isaiah. It is a legitimate inference that the passage which Jesus thus read was one in which He wished men to see the leading idea of His ministry. Glad tidings for the poor, remission of sins, comfort for the mourners, these were what He proclaimed now. These were proclaimed again in the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount. We cannot fail to connect the opening words with the descent of the Spirit at His baptism. That was the "unction from the Holy One" (1 John ii. 20) which made Him the Christ, the true anointed of the Lord.

**Recovering of sight to the blind.**—The English version of Isaiah rightly follows the Hebrew in giving "the opening of the prison to them that are bound." The blindness is that of those who have been imprisoned in the darkness.

(19) **The acceptable year of the Lord.**—The primary reference was to the year of Jubilee, when land that had been mortgaged returned to its owner, and debts were forgiven, and Israelite slaves released (Lev. xxv. 9, 10). It was to our Lord, as it had been to Isaiah, the type of the "year" of the divine kingdom. A somewhat slavish literalism, which the study of St. John's Gospel (chaps. ii., v., vi., vii., xii.) would have dispelled in an hour, led some of the Fathers to infer from this that our Lord's ministry lasted but for a single year.

(20) **And he closed the book.**—Better, *rolled up*, as describing the actual manner of closing. The description is characteristic as indicating (1) that it probably came in the first instance from an eye-witness, and (2) the calmness and deliberation with which our Lord acted.

**And sat down.**—This conveys to us the idea of falling back to a place of comparative obscurity among the congregation. To the Jew it implied just the opposite. The chair near the place from which the lesson was read was the pulpit of the Rabbi, and to sit down in that chair (as in Matt. v. 1, xxiii. 2) was an assumption by our Lord, apparently for the first time in that synagogue, of the preacher's function. This led to the eager, fixed gaze of wonder which the next clause speaks of.

**Fastened on him.**—The Greek word so rendered is noticeable as being used twelve times by St. Luke, (chiefly in the Acts), and twice by St. Paul (2 Cor. iii. 7, 13), and by no other writer of the New Testament. It had been used by Aristotle in his scientific writings, and was probably a half-technical word which St. Luke's studies as a physician had brought into his vocabulary, and which St. Paul learnt, as it were, from him.

(21) **This day is this scripture fulfilled.**—It is obvious that we have here only the opening words of the sermon preached on the text from Isaiah. There must have been more than this, remembered too vaguely for record, to explain the admiration of which the next clause speaks. But this was what startled them: He had left them as the son of the carpenter—mother, brethren, sisters were still among them—and now He came back claiming to be the Christ, and to make words that had seemed to speak of a far-off glorious dream, as a living and present reality.

(22) **The gracious words.**—Literally, *the words of grace.* It is noticeable that the latter noun does not occur at all in St. Matthew or St. Mark, becomes prominent in the Acts, and is afterwards the most characteristic word of the Epistles of St. Paul and St. Peter.

(23) **Physician, heal thyself.**—There is something interesting in our finding this proverb in the Gospel of the beloved physician. May we think of him as hearing the proverb casually, tracking out its application,

Capernaum, do also here in thy country. (24) And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.[a] (25) But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias,[b] when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; (26) but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, *a city* of Sidon, unto a woman *that was* a widow. (27) And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet;[c] and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian. (28) And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, (29) and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow[1] of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. (30) But he passing through the midst of them went his way, (31) and came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days. (32) And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.[d]

(33) And in the synagogue there was a man,[e] which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, (34) saying, Let *us* alone;[2] what have we to do with thee, *thou* Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God. (35) And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not. (36) And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word *is* this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out. (37) And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.

(38) And he arose out of the synagogue,[f] and entered into Simon's house. And

[d] Matt. 7. 29.

[a] Matt. 13. 57

[e] Mark 1. 23.

[b] 1 Kings 17. 9.

[2] Or, *Away.*

[c] 2 Kings 5 14.

[1] Or, *edge.*

[f] Matt. 8. 14.

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and so coming on this history? It was, probably, so far as is known, a common Jewish proverb; but there is no trace of it in Greek writers, and it was therefore likely to attract his notice.

(24) **No prophet is accepted.**—The proverb is remarkable as having been quoted by our Lord certainly twice, possibly oftener: (1) on this His first visit after His baptism to Nazareth; (2) on His second visit (Matt. xiii. 57; Mark vi. 4). St. John's reference to it (iv. 44) may have risen out of one or other of these two occasions, but it rather conveys the impression of the saying having been often on the lips of Jesus.

(26) **Save unto Sarepta.**—Better, *but unto Sarepta,* the Greek conjunction here marking a contrast rather than an exception. Sarepta, the Zarephath of 1 Kings xvii. 9, was a Phœnician city lying between Tyre and Sidon. The reference to this incident at the commencement of our Lord's ministry is a striking instance of His method of reading the underlying lessons of the narratives of the Old Testament, such as we see afterwards in His reference to David eating the shewbread. (See Notes on Matt. xii. 3, 4.) In what seemed a mere episode in the life of Elijah He finds a truth which implies the future calling of the Gentiles. When He complied with the prayer of the Syro-Phœnician woman, He was doing as Elijah had done.

(27) **Eliseus the prophet.**—The original gives, as was natural, the Greek form of Elisha, as before of Elijah.

**Saving Naaman.**—Better, *but Naaman,* as before.

(28) **Were filled with wrath.**—The admiration they had felt at first was soon turned into bitterness. They heard themselves spoken of as though there might be a faith in Zidon and in Syria which was not found in Israel, of which they themselves were altogether destitute.

(29) **The brow of the hill.**—See Notes on chap. i. 26. The hill now shown as the Mount of Precipitation is about two miles from the city, and could hardly have been the place referred to. There is, however, a cliff about forty feet high close to the city.

**That they might cast him down headlong.**—The Greek word implies casting down from a cliff or precipice. It was not a recognised Jewish punishment, as flinging from the Tarpeian rock was at Rome; but we have an instance of it as an improvised method of execution in Amaziah's treatment of the Edomite prisoners in 2 Chron. xxv. 12. A multitude under the influence of fanaticism or anger is always fertile in expedients of this nature.

(30) **He passing through the midst of them.**—The words do not necessarily involve a directly supernatural deliverance, as though the multitude had been smitten with blindness, or our Lord had become invisible. We have no right to insert miracles in the Gospel records. Calmness, silence, the moral power of self-possessed righteousness have in themselves a power, often proved, to baffle the fury of an angry mob.

(31) **And came down to Capernaum.**—See Note on Matt. iv. 13. St. Luke, it will be noticed, gives, what St. Matthew does not give, the reason of the removal.

(32) **At his doctrine.**—Better, *His teaching,* as elsewhere. The form and manner was what amazed men.

**His word was with power.**—The word used is the same as the "authority" of Matt. vii. 29. There was no timid references to the traditions of the elders or the *dictum* of this or that scribe, such as they were familiar with in the sermons they commonly heard in their synagogues.

(33—37) **And in the synagogue.**—See Notes on Mark i. 23—27. The narrative, as being common to these two Gospels, and not found in St. Matthew, may be looked on as having probably been communicated by one Evangelist to the other when they met at Rome (Col. iv. 10, 14). See *Introduction* to St. Mark.

(38, 39) **And he arose out of the synagogue.**—See Notes on Matt. viii. 14. Peculiar to St. Luke and

Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her. (39) And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.

(40) Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them. (41) And devils also came out of many,[a] crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking *them* suffered them not to speak:[1] for they knew that he was Christ. (42) And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them. (43) And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent. (44) And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

A.D. 31.

CHAPTER V.—(1) And it came to pass,[b] that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, (2) and saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing *their* nets. (3) And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship. (4) Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. (5) And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have

[a] Mark 1. 34.

[b] Matt. 4. 18.

[1] Or, *to say that they knew him to be Christ.*

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indicating what we may venture to call accurate diagnosis, are the "great fever," our Lord's "rebuking" the fever, and the "immediate" rising to minister.

(40, 41) **Now when the sun was setting.**—See Notes on Matt. viii. 16, 17. Common to St. Luke and St. Mark are the "divers diseases," and the silence imposed on the demoniacs. The words of the demoniacs, "Thou art the Son of God," and "they knew that He was the Christ," are peculiar to this Gospel.

(42—44) **And when it was . . .**—Again we have a narrative omitted by St. Matthew, but common to St. Luke and St. Mark. See Notes on Mark i. 35—39.

**The people sought him.**—The Greek tense implies continued seeking.

**And stayed him.**—Better, *tried to stay Him.* Their wish was that He should remain at Capernaum, heal their sick, teach them, and perhaps also that they and their fellow-townsmen might thus share in the fame of the new Prophet.

(43) **I must preach.**—Better, *I must declare the glad tidings of the kingdom.* The Greek verb is literally "to evangelise," and is quite distinct from that commonly translated "preach."

**To other cities also.**—Literally, *to the other cities,* with a special reference, probably, to those of Galilee.

(44) **He preached.**—Literally, *was preaching.*

## V.

(1—11) **And it came to pass . . .**—See Notes on Matt. iv. 18—22. The narrative here has so many points in common with that in St. Matthew and St. Mark (i. 16—20) that it has been supposed by most commentators to be a different report of the same facts. It is supposed to be all but incredible that the call to the four disciples, the promise that they should be "fishers of men," their leaving all and following their Master, could have been repeated after comparatively so short an interval. On the other hand, St. Luke places it after the healing of Simon's wife's mother; St. Mark and St. Matthew place what they relate before, and the miraculous draught of fishes and Peter's confession are singularly distinctive features. Their narrative, again, is unconnected with our Lord's preaching to the people, with which this opens. On the whole we cannot go farther than saying that there is a slight presumption against the hypothesis of identity. On the assumption of difference we may infer that while our Lord went by Himself to preach the gospel of the kingdom to "the other cities," the disciples returned, as they did after the Resurrection, to their old manner of life, and were now called again to their higher work.

**The lake of Gennesaret.**—St. Luke is the only Evangelist who thus describes the Sea of Galilee. On the land of Gennesaret, see Note on Matt. xiv. 34.

(2) **Two ships.**—Better, *boats,* or *little ships,* the Greek word being a diminutive, as in John vi. 23. The narrative implies that they were the boats respectively of Jonas, the father of Peter and Andrew, and of Zebedee.

**Washing their nets.**—There is a slight, but noticeable variation here, from the "mending their nets" in St. Matthew and St. Mark. The process implied that having fished fruitlessly during the night, they were now giving up the work, and cleaning their nets from weeds, etc., before laying them up. On the assumption that the two narratives refer to the same event, some have seen in the "mending," a confirmation of the statement in St. Luke that the "nets brake." The Note on verse 6 will, however, show that is precisely what he does not say.

(3) **He entered into one of the ships.**—Our Lord would seem to have chosen this mode of teaching not unfrequently.

(4) **Let down your nets.**—It is, perhaps, a slight indication that the narrative of St. Luke does not give the same event as the other Gospels, that they use a different word for "net," and one that has, technically, quite a distinct meaning. St. Luke's word, however, is generic, and may therefore include the other; and the other two use it when they speak of the disciples leaving their "nets."

(5) **Master, we have toiled all the night.**—The word translated Master (*epistates*) is not the same as that (*didaskalos*, teacher) in the other Gospels, and often in this also, and is peculiar to St. Luke. It

taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. (6) And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. (7) And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. (8) When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. (9) For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken: (10) and so *was* also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. (11) And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

(12) And it came to pass,[a] when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on *his* face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. (13) And he put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him. (14) And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. (15) But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities.

(16) And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed. (17) And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judæa, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was *present* to heal them.

(18) And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a

[a] Matt. 8. 2.

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implies a less distinct recognition of our Lord's character as a teacher or Rabbi, and was more the language of general respect, such as workmen might use of their master. Here, however, St. Peter's language implies the previous discipleship which we learn from John i. 35—43.

(6) **Their net brake.**—Better, *their nets were breaking*, the tense being the imperfect.

(7) **Their partners, which were in the other ship.**—These are named in verse 10 as "James, and John, the sons of Zebedee."

(8) **Depart from me; for I am a sinful man.**—We must remember that both before and on that very day Peter had listened to our Lord's teaching in all its deep and piercing power, and that thus what we have learnt to call "conviction of sin" may well have been begun in him. Then came the miracle, with the proof it gave of superhuman power and knowledge, and with that the consciousness, such as ever accompanies man's recognition of contact with the divine, of his own exceeding sinfulness. So Isaiah cried, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips" (Isa. vi. 5). So Job cried, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee; wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes" (Job xlii. 5, 6).

(9) **For he was astonished.**—More literally, *for astonishment seized him.*

(10) **Which were partners with Simon.**—The Greek word is not the same as that in verse 7; that expressing that they were sharers in the work, this a more general partnership in business, as in Philem. verse 17.

**Thou shalt catch men.**—This is St. Luke's equivalent for the "I will make you fishers of men" in St. Matthew and St. Mark. The word implies that what is caught is taken alive. The only other passage in which it occurs in the New Testament is 2 Tim. ii. 26.

(11) **They forsook all . . .**—This is obviously the strong point in favour of the identity of the facts related by the three Evangelists, but it admits of being explained, as above, by supposing a temporary return (such as we find after the Resurrection in John xxi. 1) to their former calling.

(12—16) **A man full of leprosy.**—See Notes on Matt. viii. 2—4. The precise description is peculiar to, and characteristic of, St. Luke, as is also the man's "falling on his face." The latter is interesting as explaining the more general "worshipping" of St. Mark.

(15) **So much the more.**—The statement agrees with St. Mark, St. Matthew closing his account with the command given to the leper. Both the verbs, "went" and "came together," are in the tense that implies continuous action.

(16) **He withdrew himself into the wilderness.**—Literally, *into the wildernesses*, agreeing with St. Mark's "in desert places," now in one part, now in another, of the unenclosed, uncultivated country. The addition that he "was praying" there is peculiar to St. Luke, who, throughout his Gospel, lays stress on this feature in our Lord's life. (See *Introduction.*)

(17—26) **It came to pass . . .**—See Notes on Matt. ix. 1—8.

**Pharisees and doctors of the law.**—The description of the crowd of listeners is peculiar to St. Luke. The fact that many of the doctors of the law had come from Jerusalem is obviously important in its connection with St. John's account (chaps. ii., v.) of our Lord's previous work in that city, and as explaining the part now taken by them.

**Was present to heal them.**—If we retain the plural pronoun, it must be taken generally as meaning those who sought healing. The better MSS., however, give the singular, and then it must be taken, "the power of the Lord (*i.e.*, of God) was present for His (work of) healing."

(18) **Which was taken with a palsy.**—Literally *paralysed*, or *palsy-stricken*, a somewhat more technical,

palsy:[a] and they sought *means* to bring him in, and to lay *him* before him. (19) And when they could not find by what *way* they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with *his* couch into the midst before Jesus. (20) And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. (21) And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone? (22) But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? (23) Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk? (24) But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house. (25) And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. (26) And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day.

(27) And after these things he went forth,[b] and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. (28) And he left all, rose up, and followed him. (29) And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them. (30) But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners? (31) And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. (32) I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

(33) And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often,[c] and make prayers, and likewise *the disciples* of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink? (34) And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? (35) But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

(36) And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then

[a] Matt. 9. 2.

[b] Matt. 9. 9.

[c] Matt. 9. 14.

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and therefore characteristic word than the "sick of the palsy" in the other Gospels.

(19) **With his couch.**—The Greek word is the diminutive of the word translated "bed" in verse 18, and is used, apparently, as St. Mark uses the Latin *grabatum*, to show how it was that the process described was possible.

(22) **When Jesus perceived their thoughts.**—Better, *their reasonings*, the Greek noun being formed from the verb used in verse 21.

(25) **Glorifying God.**—The fact that the man himself did this as well as the by-standers is peculiar to St. Luke.

(26) **They glorified God.**—Noticeable as common to all the three reports. The precise expression, "We have seen strange things to-day" (literally, *things beyond expectation*), is peculiar to St. Luke.

(27—32) **A publican, named Levi.**—See Notes on Matt. ix. 9—13, Mark ii. 14—17. St. Luke's agreement with St. Mark is again a noticeable fact.

(28) **And followed him.**—Not then only, but continually, the verb being in the imperfect tense.

(29) **A great feast.**—The fact stated agrees with St. Mark, but the precise phrase is peculiar to St. Luke. The noun means literally a *reception*, and agrees, curiously enough, with the most modern use of that word.

**Of publicans and of others.**—It is, perhaps, characteristic of St. Luke as a Gentile that he will not use the word "sinners" as St. Matthew and St. Mark appear to have used it, as popularly including heathen as such, and substitutes the vaguer word "others."

(30) **Murmured.**—Better, *were murmuring.* In reporting what was said by others, St. Luke naturally gives the word "sinners" as it was actually spoken.

(31) **They that are whole.**—Better, *they that are in health.* Note, as once more characteristic of the "physician," the use of this term instead of "they that are strong," the strict meaning of the Greek word used in the other two Gospels. (See *Introduction.*)

(32) **I came not.**—Strictly, *I have not come.*

**But sinners to repentance.**—In the best MSS. the last word is added by St. Luke only. One MS. (the Sinaitic) has the remarkable various-reading "the ungodly" for "sinners," as if from a recollection of Rom. v. 6, 7.

(33—39) **Why do the disciples of John fast?**—See Notes on Matt. ix. 14—17, Mark ii. 18—22. St. Luke is less definite than the other two in stating who the questioners were. It is only from St. Mark that we learn that they included the two classes to whom the question referred.

(34) **Can ye make . . .?**—The question is somewhat stronger in form than the simple, "Can the children of the bride-chamber fast?" in the other reports.

(36) **And he spake also a parable unto them.**—The illustration that follows is common to all three reports, but St. Luke only describes it as a parable, the others apparently confining that term to something that took the form of an actual narrative.

**No man putteth.**—The better MSS. give, *No man having rent a piece from a new garment putteth it upon* both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was *taken* out of the new agreeth not with the old. (37) And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. (38) But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. (39) No man also having drunk old *wine* straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.

A.D. 31.

a Matt. 12. 1.

CHAPTER VI.—(1) And it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first,[a] that he went through the corn fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing *them* in *their* hands. (2) And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath days? (3) And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when

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*an old.* The form which the illustration thus assumes gives it obviously a greater vividness. What folly could be greater than the act described?

**Both the new maketh a rent.**—Better, as agreeing with the reading just given, *he will both rend the new, and the patch from the new will not agree with the old.*

(37) **Else.**—Better, as before, *if otherwise.*

**The bottles shall perish.**—Better, *will* perish, there being no reason for any difference between the two verbs.

(39) **No man also having drunk old wine.**—This addition is peculiar to St. Luke, and calls accordingly for distinct notice. The interpretation of the imagery is not far to seek. The old wine is the principle—in spiritual things, the religion—that animated the man's former life. In relation to those immediately addressed, it represented the motive-power of the Law in its rigid and Pharisaic form. The new wine, as in the Notes on the previous parables, is the freer, nobler, life-power of the gospel. It was not to be wondered at that men accustomed to the older system should be unwilling to embrace the new, as thinking it stronger and more potent than they could bear. The words are spoken in a tone of something like a tolerant pity for the prejudices of age and custom.

**The old is better.**—The better MSS. give simply "the old is good," the adjective partly implying the sense of "mild." It is not the same as the "good wine" of the miracle at Cana (John ii. 10). It is doubtful, indeed, whether the Jews attached the same value that we do to the mellowed flavour given to wine by age. New or sweet wine, drunk within a year or so of fermentation, would seem to have been the favourite delicacy (Neh. x. 39; Prov. iii. 10; Hos. iv. 11; Hag. i. 11, *et al.*), though men of weak constitutions might shrink from its effects, as the Pharisees were shrinking from the freedom of which our Lord set the example. Not altogether without significance, as bearing on this passage, is the fact recorded by St. Luke (Acts ii. 13), that the first workings of the Pentecostal gift led men to speak of the disciples as "full of new wine."

## VI.

(1) **On the second sabbath after the first.**—Literally, *the second-first Sabbath.* There is nothing like the phrase in any other author, and its meaning is therefore to a great extent conjectural. Its employment by St. Luke may be noted as indicating his wish to be accurate as an historian. He sought to gather, as far as he could, definite dates; and hearing, in the course of his inquiries, of this, as fixing the time of what followed, inserted it in his record.

It may be noted that the facts of the case fix limits on either side. The corn was ripe enough to be rubbed in the hands, and yield its grain. It had not yet been gathered. It could not therefore be much earlier than the Passover, when the barley harvest began, and not much later than the Pentecost, when the wheat was ripe. If it preceded, as it appears to have done (see chap. ix. 12), the feeding of the Five Thousand, it must have been before the Passover (John vi. 4). The conjectures, such as they are, are as follows:—

(1.) The *first* Sabbath of the *second* month of the year, taking Nisan (in which the Passover occurred) as the first month.

(2.) The *first* Sabbath after the *second* day of the Passover, that day being itself kept as a supplementary feast.

(3.) The *first* Sabbath in the *second* year of the sabbatic cycle of seven years.

(4.) As the Jewish year had two beginnings, one (the civil) reckoning from the month Tisri (including part of September and October); the other (the ecclesiastical) from Nisan, it has been supposed that the first Sabbath in Tisri was called *first-first*, the first in Nisan *second-first.*

(5.) The Sabbath in the Pentecostal week, the *second chief* or *first* Sabbath, as that in the Passover week was the first.

(6.) The day after the new moon, when, through some accident, its appearance had not been reported to the Sanhedrin in time for the sacrifice connected with it. In such a case the second day was kept as the monthly feast, *i.e.*, received the honours of the first, and so might come to be known technically as the *second-first.* If it coincided, as often it must have done, with the actual Sabbath, such a day might naturally be called a *second-first Sabbath.*

In the total dearth of information it is impossible to speak decisively in favour of any one of these views. The last has the merit of at least suggesting the way in which St. Luke may have become acquainted with so peculiar a term. We know from Jewish writers in the Mishna that the new-moon feast was determined by the personal observation of watchmen appointed by the Sanhedrin, and not by astronomical calculation, and it was when they failed to observe or report it in time that the rule stated above came into play. We know from Col. ii. 16, that the observance of that feast had risen into a new prominence in the ritual of a sect which there is every reason to identify with that of the Essenes. (See Note on Col. ii. 16.) Among those whom St. Luke seems to have known at Antioch we find the name of Manaen, or Menahem, the foster-brother of Herod the Tetrarch (Acts xiii. 1), presumably, as many commentators have suggested, the son or grandson of Menahem, an Essene prophet, who had predicted the future sovereignty of Herod the Great. (See *Introduction.*) In this way, accordingly, if such a technical nomenclature were in use, as it was himself was an hungred, and they which were with him; (4) how he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone? (5) And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath. (6) And it came to pass also on another sabbath,[a] that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered. (7) And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him. (8) But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. (9) Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy *it?* (10) And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other. (11) And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus. (12) And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

(13) And when it was day, he called *unto him* his disciples: and of them he

[a] Matt. 12. 9.

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likely to be among the Essenes, St. Luke was likely to hear it. We may add further, that Manaen, from his position, was likely to have been brought into contact with the Baptist; that he could scarcely fail to have been impressed with a life which was so entirely moulded, outwardly at least, on the Essene type; and must have passed through the teaching of John to that of Christ. We find this incident following in immediate sequence upon one in which the disciples of John were prominent (chap. v. 33). May we not think therefore, with some reason, of Manaen having been among them, and of his having supplied St. Luke with the technical term that fixed the very day of the journey through the corn-fields? Combining this view with the fact that if this were a new-moon Sabbath it must have been the beginning of the moon of Nisan, possibly coinciding with an actual Sabbath, we have the interesting fact that the lesson for the first Sabbath in that month, in the modern Jewish calendar, is from 1 Sam. xxi., and so contained the history of the shewbread to which our Lord refers. This coincidence, corresponding with what we find in the synagogue discourses of chap. iv. 17, and of Acts xiii. 15 (where see Note), is another confirmation of the view now maintained.

It remains to add that one group of MSS. of high authority omit the perplexing word, and that some critics hold it to have grown out of an original "on the first Sabbath," as contrasted with the "other Sabbath" of verse 6; and suppose that an ignorant scribe corrected this in the margin to "second," and that one still more ignorant combined the two readings. These arbitrary conjectures are, however, eminently unscholarly; and the very difficulty presented by the word must, on all usual laws of textual criticism, be admitted as an argument for its genuineness.

**He went through the corn-fields.**—See for the narrative that follows Notes on Matt. xii. 1—8, Mark ii. 23—28.

**Plucked the ears of corn, and did eat.**—Better, *were plucking, and were eating.*

(6) **It came to pass also on another sabbath.**—See Notes on Matt. xii. 9—14, Mark iii. 1—6.

**Whose right hand was withered.**—St. Luke alone specifies which hand it was that was affected.

(7) **The scribes and Pharisees watched him.**—Better, *were watching.*

(8) **Rise up, and stand forth in the midst.**—Here again, and throughout what follows, we have another example of a narrative in which St. Mark and St. Luke agree much more closely than either agrees with St. Matthew.

(10) **And looking round about upon them.**—See Notes on Mark iii. 4.

(11) **They were filled with madness.**—The expression is peculiar to St. Luke's report.

**Communed one with another.**—It seems singular that Luke, who in other respects seems to have had so many points of contact with people connected with the Herods (see *Introduction*), should have omitted the fact which St. Mark records, that it was with the Herodians that the Pharisees took counsel. Possibly, however, his very acquaintance with the men so named may have made him reluctant to give a special prominence to the part they had taken against the Christ. St. Mark, it will be remembered, says that they "took counsel" (or, *held a council*) that they might destroy Him.

(12) **He went out into a mountain to pray.**—Better, *into the mountain,* or, *the hill country.* The stress laid on the prayers of Jesus is again characteristic of St. Luke.

**Continued all night in prayer to God.**—The original, at least, admits of another rendering. The word translated "prayer" (*proseuchè*) had come to be applied to the place dedicated to prayer—the chapel or oratory by the river-side, or on the mountain-side, where there was a running stream available for ablutions, to which devout Jews could retire for their devotions. Such a *proseuchè* there seems to have been at Philippi (Acts xvi. 13). Another is named at Halicarnassus. Such, the language of Roman poets (*in quâ te quœro proseuchâ,* Juvenal, *Sat.* iii. 296) shows us, there were at Rome. The fact mentioned by Josephus that there was one near Tiberias (*Life,* c. 54) shows that they were not unknown in Galilee. The precise combination of words—literally, *in the prayer of God*—is not found elsewhere for prayer as offered to God.

(13) **And when it was day.**—In the place which he assigns to the choice of the Twelve, St. Luke agrees more closely with St. Mark than with St. Matthew, who makes it precede the narratives of the disciples plucking the ears of corn, and the healing of the withered hand, which here it follows. A precisely-

chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;[a] (14) Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, (15) Matthew and Thomas, James the *son* of Alphæus, and Simon called Zelotes, (16) And Judas *the brother* of James,[b] and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

(17) And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judæa and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; (18) and they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. (19) And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed *them* all.

(20) And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed *be ye* poor:[c] for your's is the kingdom of God. (21) Blessed *are ye* that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed *are ye* that weep

[a] Matt. 10. 1.

[b] Jude 1.

[c] Matt. 5. 3.

harmonised arrangement seems here impossible, and is, happily, unimportant. We must be content to admit the possibility, whether accidental or intentional, of one or other of the Gospels, possibly of all three, arranging facts in some other order than that of chronological sequence. The point to which St. Luke's record was obviously intended to give prominence is that the choice of the Twelve came as the result of the night of prayer, just as the prominent thought in St. Matthew (ix. 36) is that it grew out of our Lord's compassion for the multitude that were as sheep without a shepherd.

(14—16) **Simon, (whom he also named Peter).**—For the list of the Twelve Apostles see Notes on Matt. x. 2.

The only special points in St. Luke's list are (1) that he gives Simon Zelotes, obviously as a translation, for Simon the Cananite, or Cananæan, of the other two lists, and gives *James's Judas*, leaving it uncertain whether he means that the latter was son or brother of the former. His use of the same formula in the genealogy of chap. iii. is in favour of the former relationship.

(17) **And he came down with them, and stood in the plain.**—We are again confronted with harmonistic difficulties. In St. Matthew (chap. x.) the mission of the Twelve is followed by a full discourse on their Apostolic work and its perils. Here it is followed by a discourse which has so many points of resemblance with the Sermon on the Mount in Matt. v., vi., vii., that many have supposed it to be identical. It is a partial explanation of the difficulty that St. Mark and St. Luke distinguish the choice of the Twelve from their mission, the latter meeting us in chap. ix. 1, Mark vi. 7, and that in a form which implies the previous existence of the Twelve as a distinct body; but we still have to face the fact that events which St. Mark and St. Luke place even before the choice, St. Matthew places after the mission. (See Note on verse 13.)

**Stood in the plain.**—Better, *on a plain*, or *on a level place*. The Greek has no article.

**A great multitude of people.**—The description that follows has many points of resemblance both with that in Mark iii. 7—12, and with that in Matt. iv. 24, immediately before the Sermon on the Mount. It is probable enough that each separate report of any of our Lord's great discourses dwelt upon the multitudes who were present to hear them.

(19) **There went virtue out of him.**—The use of the term "virtue" (or *power*) in this technical sense is peculiar to St. Luke, and may be noted as characteristic of the medical Evangelist. (Comp. *Introduction.*)

(20) **Blessed be ye poor . . .**—See Notes on Matt. v. 1. The conclusion there arrived at—that the two discourses differ so widely, both in their substance and in their position in the Gospel narrative, that it is a less violent hypothesis to infer that they were spoken at different times than to assume that the two Evangelists inserted or omitted, as they thought fit, in reporting the same discourse—will be taken here as the basis of interpretation. It was quite after our Lord's method of teaching that He should thus reproduce, with more or less variation, what He had taught before. The English, "Blessed be ye poor," is ambiguous, as leaving it uncertain whether the words are the declaration of a fact or the utterance of a prayer. Better, *Blessed are ye poor.* We note at once the absence of the qualifying words of St. Matthew's "poor *in spirit.*" Assume the identity of the two discourses, and then we have to think of St. Luke or his informant as omitting words, and those singularly important words, which our Lord had spoken; and this, it is obvious, presents a far greater difficulty than the thought that our Lord varied the aspects of the truths which He presented, now affirming the blessedness of the "poor in spirit," now that of those who were literally "poor," as having less to hinder them from the attainment of the higher poverty. See Notes on Matt. v. 3. It seems to have been St. Luke's special aim to collect as much as he could of our Lord's teaching as to the danger of riches. (See *Introduction.*)

Note the substitution of the "kingdom of God" for the "kingdom of heaven" in St. Matthew.

(21) **Blessed are ye that hunger now.**—In the second beatitude, as in the first, we note the absence of the words that seem to give the blessing on those that "hunger and thirst after righteousness" its specially spiritual character. The law implied is obviously the same as before. Fulness of bread, a life abounding in comforts and luxuries, like that of the Rich Man in the parable of chap. xvi. 19, tends to dull the edge of appetite for higher things. Those who know what the hunger of the body is, can understand better, and are more likely to feel, the hunger of the soul.

**Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.**—The clause is remarkable as being (with its counterpart in verse 25) the only instance in the New Testament of the use of "laughter" as the symbol of spiritual joy. In Jas. iv. 9 it comes in as representing worldly gladness; but the Greek word was too much associated with the lower forms of mirth to find ready acceptance. It is probable that the Aramaic word which our Lord used, like the mirth or laughter which entered into the name of Isaac (Gen. xxi. 6), had a somewhat higher meaning. Hebrew laughter was a now: for ye shall laugh. (22) Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you *from their company*, and shall reproach *you*, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. (23) Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward *is* great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets. (24) But woe unto you that are rich![a] for ye have received your consolation. (25) Woe unto you that are full![b] for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep. (26) Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

(27) But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies,[c] do good to them which hate you, (28) bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. (29) And unto him that smiteth thee on the *one* cheek offer also the other;[d] and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not *to take thy* coat also.[e] (30) Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask *them* not again. (31) And as ye would that men should do to you,[f] do ye also to them likewise. (32) For if ye love them which love you,[g] what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. (33) And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank

[c] Matt. 5. 44.

[d] Matt. 5. 39.

[e] 1 Cor. 6. 7.

[a] Amos 6. 1.

[f] Tob. 4. 15; Matt. 7. 12.

[b] Isa. 65. 13.

[g] Matt. 5. 46.

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somewhat graver thing than that of Greek or Roman. It had had no comedy to degrade it.

(22) **Blessed are ye.**—See Notes on Matt. v. 10—12. The clause "when they shall separate you from their company" is peculiar to St. Luke, and refers to the excommunication or exclusion from the synagogue, and therefore from social fellowship, of which we read in John xvi. 2.

(23) **Leap for joy.**—The word is peculiar to St. Luke in the New Testament, and occurs elsewhere only in chap. i. 41, 44.

(24) **But woe unto you that are rich!**—Better, *woe for you*, the tone being, as sometimes (though, as Matt. xxiii. shows, not uniformly) with this expression, one of pity rather than denunciation. (Comp. Matt. xxiii. 13; Mark xiii. 17; Luke xxi. 23.) We enter here on what is a distinct feature of the Sermon on the Plain—the woes that, as it were, balance the beatitudes. It obviously lay in St. Luke's purpose, as a physician of the soul, to treasure up and record all our Lord's warnings against the perilous temptations that wealth brings with it. The truth thus stated in its naked awfulness is reproduced afterwards in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (chap. xvi. 19).

**Ye have received your consolation.**—Better, simply, *ye have your consolation—i.e.*, all that you understand or care for, all, therefore, that you can have. The thought appears again in the words of Abraham, "Thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things" (chap. xvi. 25). The verb is the same as in "they have their reward," in Matt. vi. 2, 5.

(25) **Woe unto you that are full!**—The fulness is, as the context shows, that of the satiety of over-indulgence. The word is closely connected with that *fulness* (rather than "satisfying") of the flesh of which St. Paul speaks in Col. ii. 23.

**Woe unto you that laugh now!**—We note here, as so often elsewhere, an echo of our Lord's teaching, in that of James the brother of the Lord. He, too, presents the same contrast, "Let your laughter be turned to mourning" (Jas. iv. 9).

(26) **So did their fathers to the false prophets.**—The words are of very wide application, but it is probable that there is a special reference in them to the time of Hezekiah and the later kings of Judah. (Comp. Isa. xxx. 10; Jer. v. 31.) They open a wide question as to the worth of praise as a test of human conduct, and tend to a conclusion quite the reverse of that implied in the maxim, *Vox populi, vox Dei.* Truth, in matters which, like religion or politics, impinge on men's interests or prejudices, is often, if not always, on the side of the minority, sometimes even on that of one who is as an *Athanasius contra mundum.* On the other hand, praise (Phil. iv. 8) and good repute (1 Tim. iii. 7) have their value as the witnesses borne by the moral sense of men, when not deadened or perverted to the beauty of holiness, the *testimonium animæ naturaliter Christianæ* to the moral excellence of the followers of Christ.

(27, 28) **Love your enemies.**—See Notes on Matt. v. 44. It should be noted that the great command of the gospel is set forth in the Sermon on the Plain in its width and universality, without being formally contrasted with the Pharisaic gloss, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy," as in the Sermon on the Mount.

(29) **And unto him that smiteth thee . . .**—See Notes on Matt. v. 39, 40.

**And him that taketh away thy cloke.**—St. Luke's report of the maxim points to direct violence, St. Matthew's to legal process. It is noticeable also that St. Luke inverts the order of the "cloke" and the "coat." "If he takes the upper garment, give him the under one also."

(30) **Give to every man that asketh of thee.**—See Note on Matt. v. 42.

(31) **As ye would that men should do to you . . .**—See Note on Matt. vii. 12. The very different arrangement of the precepts in the two discourses is obviously an argument against their identity.

(32) **For if ye love them which love you.**—See Note on Matt. v. 46, and note St. Luke's use, as writing for Gentiles, of the wider term "sinners," instead of the more specific "publicans," which pointed the maxim, perhaps, for those who originally heard it, and certainly for St. Matthew's Jewish readers. There is also a slight variation in the form of the closing questions—St. Luke's "what *thank* have ye" pointing to the expectation of gratitude in return for good offices, St. Matthew's "what *reward*" to a more concrete and solid payment.

(33) **If ye do good to them . . .**—Actual deeds of kindness take the place in St. Luke which in St. Matthew is occupied by the salutations which were but the outward signs of kindness.

have ye? for sinners also do even the same. (34) And if ye lend *to them* of whom ye hope to receive,[a] what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. (35) But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and *to* the evil. (36) Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. (37) Judge not,[b] and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: (38) give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again. (39) And he spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind?[c] shall they not both fall into the ditch? (40) The disciple is not above his master:[d] but every one that is perfect shall be as his

[a] Matt. 5. 42.

[c] Matt. 15. 14.

[d] Matt. 10. 24.

[b] Matt. 7. 1.

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(34) **If ye lend to them . . .**—This special illustration of the law of unselfish kindness is in this collocation peculiar to St. Luke; but it is implied in the precept of Matt. v. 42.

**To receive as much again.**—It is noticeable, as implying that the precepts were given in the first instance to Jewish hearers, that receiving interest on the loan is not contemplated at all. (See Note on Matt. v. 42.)

(35) **Love ye your enemies.**—The tense of the Greek verb may be noted as implying a perpetual abiding rule of action.

**Hoping for nothing again.**—Better, *in nothing losing hope.* It is possible that the Greek verb may have the sense given in the text, but its uniform signification in the LXX. (as in Ecclus. xxii. 21—24, xxvii. 21), which must be allowed great weight in interpreting a writer like St. Luke, is that of "giving up hope," *despairing.* And this gives, it is obvious, a meaning not less admirable than that of the received version, "Give and lend according to the law of Christ, and do not let the absence of immediate profit make you lose heart and hope." There is a "great reward." The last words at least remind us of the promise made to Abraham, and may be interpreted by it. God Himself is our "exceeding great reward" (Gen. xv. 1). One or two MSS. give a masculine instead of a neuter pronoun after the verb, and in that case the verb must be taken as transitive. We have accordingly to choose between *in nothing despairing,* or *driving no man to despair.* On the whole, the former seems preferable. So taken, we may compare it with St. Paul's description of "charity" or "love," as "hoping all things" (1 Cor. xiii. 7), and his counsel, "Be not weary in well doing" (Gal. vi. 9).

**The children of the Highest.**—Better, for the sake of uniformity with the other passages where the word occurs, *sons of the Most High.* The passage is noticeable as the only instance in which our Lord Himself applies this name to the Father.

**He is kind.**—The generalised word takes the place of the more specific reference to the rain and sunshine as God's gifts to all, in Matt. v. 45. The word rendered "kind" is applied to God in the Greek version of Ps. xxxiv. 8, quoted in 1 Pet. ii. 3, and is there rendered "gracious."

(36) **Be ye therefore merciful.**—The form of the sentence is the same as that of Matt. v. 48, but "merciful" takes the place of "perfect," as being the noblest of the divine attributes, in which all others reach their completeness. The well-known passage in Shakespeare on the "quality of mercy," is, perhaps, the best comment on this verse (*Merchant of Venice,* iv. 1).

(37) **Judge not, and ye shall not be judged.**—See Note on Matt. vii. 1. In St. Luke's report there is something like a climax. "Seek not to judge at all. If you must judge, be not eager to condemn."

**Forgive.**—Better, *set free, release,* or *acquit;* the word expressing a quasi-judicial act rather than the forgiveness of a private wrong.

(38) **Good measure, pressed down.**—The imagery clearly points to a measure of grain, so pressed and shaken that it could hold no more.

**Into your bosom.**—The large fold of an Eastern dress over the chest, often used as a pocket.

**With the same measure that ye mete.**—See Notes on Matt. vii. 2, Mark iv. 24, for the varied applications of the proverb.

(39) **And he spake a parable unto them.**—The verse is noticeable (1) as causing a break in the discourse which has no parallel in the Sermon on the Mount; (2) as giving an example of the wider sense of the word "parable," as applicable to any proverbial saying that involved a similitude. On the proverb itself, quoted in a very different context, see Note on Matt. xv. 14. Here its application is clear enough. The man who judges and condemns another is as the blind leader of the blind. Assuming St. Paul to have known the Sermon on the Plain, we may trace an echo of the words in the "guide of the blind" of Rom. ii. 19.

(40) **The disciple is not above his master.**—See Notes on Matt. x. 24, John xv. 20. Here the application of the proverb is obviously very different. The connection of thought is somewhat obscure, and we may not unreasonably believe that some links have been omitted. As it is, however, we can infer something from what precedes and follows. We are still in that section of the discourse which warns the disciples against taking on themselves the office of a judge. They were in this to follow the example of their Master. He, in His work on earth, taught, but did not judge (John viii. 11—15; xii. 47; perhaps, also, Luke xii. 14). Were they above their Master that they should do what He had refrained from doing?

**Every one that is perfect.**—Better, *every one that is perfected.* The marginal rendering, "Every one shall be perfected," is hardly tenable grammatically The implied thought is that the disciple or scholar who has been perfected by the education through which his Master has led him, will be like the Master in character and temper, *i.e.,* in this special application of the maxim, will abstain from needless, or hasty, or uncharitable judgment.

master.[1] (41) And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye,[a] but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? (42) Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye. (43) For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit;[b] neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. (44) For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. (45) A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

(46) And why call ye me, Lord, Lord,[c] and do not the things which I say? (47) Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: (48) He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. (49) But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

A.D. 31.

CHAPTER VII.—(1) Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience

[1] Or, *shall be perfected as his master.*

[a] Matt. 7. 3.

[c] Matt. 7. 21.

[b] Matt. 7. 16.

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(41) **And why beholdest thou . . ?**—See Notes on Matt. vii. 4. The two reports of the proverb agree almost verbally, as if its repetition had impressed it deeply on the minds of the hearers.

(43—46) **For a good tree bringeth not forth . . .**—See Notes on Matt. vii. 16—21. Here again, judging by what we find in St. Matthew, there may have been missing links; but even without them the conjunction "for" does not lose its force. The good tree of a Christ-like life cannot bring forth the "corrupt fruit" (better, perhaps, *rotten* fruit) of censorious judgment; the *rotten* tree of hypocrisy cannot bring forth the "good fruit" of the power to reform and purify the lives of others. The tree of life (*i.e.*, the wisdom of perfect holiness, comp. Prov. iii. 18; xi. 30), whose leaves are for the healing of the nations (Rev. xxii. 2), is of quite another character than that.

(44) **Of thorns men do not gather figs.**—The form of the illustration differs slightly from that in St. Matthew, where the thorns are connected with grapes, and the figs with thistles. The word for "bramble bush" is the same as that used in chap. xx. 37, and in the LXX. version of Ex. iii. 2, 3, 4, and Deut. xxxiii. 16, for the burning "bush" on Sinai. We may note further the use of a different Greek word (that specially connected, as in Rev. xiv. 18, 19, with the gathering of the vintage) for the second "gather" in St. Luke's report.

(45) **A good man out of the good treasure.**—See Note on Matt. xii. 35. There the words are spoken in immediate connection with the judgment which the Pharisees had passed on our Lord as casting out devils by Beelzebub, and follow on a reproduction of the similitude of the tree and its fruit. The sequence of thought in that passage helps us to trace a like sequence here. Out of the "good treasure of his heart" the good man would bring forth, not harsh or hasty judgment, but kindness, gentleness, compassion; out of the "evil treasure" the man who was evil, the hypocrite who judged others by himself, would bring forth bitterness, and harsh surmises, and uncharitable condemnation.

(46) **And why call ye me, Lord, Lord.**—The teaching is the same in substance, though not in form.

(47—49) **Whosoever cometh to me.**—See Notes on Matt. vii. 24—27. Here again the all but verbal reproduction of the parable shows the impression which its repetition had left on the minds of men. The variations, however, are not without significance. St. Luke alone reports that the wise man "digged deep" (better, *digged, and made it deep*), and so brings out the toil and labour which attends the laying the foundation. It is not a passing emotion of assurance, a momentary act of faith, but involves a process that goes deep through the surface strata of the life, till it finds a foundation in a purified and strengthened will, or, to anticipate St. Paul's teaching, in the "new man" within us, which is one with the presence of Christ as "the hope of glory" (Eph. iv. 24; Col. i. 27).

(48) **When the flood arose.**—Here we have somewhat less fulness of detail than in St. Matthew's mention of "the rain" and the "wind," as well as the rivers or streams. The word rendered "flood" referred primarily to the "sea," but had been transferred to the movement of any large body of water.

**And could not shake it.**—Better, *and had no power to shake it.* Somewhat stronger than the form in St. Matthew, which simply states the result, "it fell not." Here the result of the "digging deep" to the rock-foundation was that the house was not even "shaken."

**For it was founded upon a rock.**—The better MSS. give, *because it had been well built,* the verse having apparently been altered in later MSS. to bring it into agreement with St. Matthew.

(49) **He that heareth, and doeth not.**—More specific than St. Matthew in adding "without a foundation," somewhat less so in giving "on the earth" instead of "on the sand."

## VII.

(1) **In the audience of the people.**—Better, *in the hearing*, or, *in the ears*, the older sense of "audience" having become obsolete.

of the people, he entered into Capernaum.[a] (2) And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die. (3) And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant. (4) And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this: (5) for he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue. (6) Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof: (7) wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. (8) For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*. (9) When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. (10) And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

(11) And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. (12) Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried

[a] Matt. 8. 5.

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**He entered into Capernaum.**—The sequence of events is the same as that in Matt. viii. 5—13; and, as far as it goes, this is an element of evidence against the conclusion that the Sermon on the Mountain and that on the Plain were altogether independent. Looking, however, at the manifest dislocation of facts in one or both of the Gospels, St. Matthew placing between the Sermon on the Mount and the healing of the centurion's servant, the healing of the leper, which St. Luke gives in chap. v. 12—16, the agreement in this instance can hardly be looked at as more than accidental.

(2) **A certain centurion's servant.**—See Notes on Matt. viii. 5—13.

**Was dear unto him.**—Literally, *was precious*, the dearness of value, but not necessarily of affection. St. Luke is here, contrary to what we might have expected, less precise than St. Matthew, who states that the slave was "sick of the palsy." Had the physician been unable to satisfy himself from what he heard as to the nature of the disease? The details that follow show that he had made inquiries, and was able to supply some details which St. Matthew had not given.

(3) **He sent unto him the elders of the Jews.**—The noun has no article. Better, *He sent unto Him elders;* not as the English suggests, the whole body of elders belonging to the synagogue or town. This is peculiar to St. Luke, and is obviously important as bearing on the position and character of the centurion. He was, like Cornelius, at least half a proselyte.

(4) **They besought him instantly.** — Better, *earnestly*, or *urgently*, the adverb "instantly" having practically lost the meaning which our translators attached to it.

(5) **He hath built us a synagogue.**—Literally, *the synagogue*, a well-known and conspicuous building, probably the only one in Capernaum, and so identical with that of which the ruins have been lately discovered by the Palestine Exploration Society. (See Note on Matt. iv. 13.)

(6) **Then Jesus went with them.**—Literally, *And Jesus was going with them.*

**The centurion sent friends to him.**—The precision of St. Luke's account leads us to receive it as a more accurate record of what St. Matthew reports in outline. It is, we may add, more true to nature. The centurion was not likely to leave the slave who was so precious to him when he seemed as in the very agonies of death.

**Trouble not thyself.**—The word is the same as in Mark v. 35, where see Note.

(7) **Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy.**—The humility of the centurion appears in a yet stronger light than in St. Matthew's report. Far from expecting the Prophet to come under his roof, he had not dared even to approach Him.

(9) **I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.**—It is, perhaps, characteristic of both the Evangelists that St. Luke omits the warning words which St. Matthew records as to the "many that shall come from the east and the west," and the exclusion of the children of the kingdom.

(10) **Found the servant whole.**—Note St. Luke's characteristic use, as in chap. v. 31, of a technical term for "healthy" or "convalescent."

(11) **He went into a city called Nain.**—The narrative that follows is peculiar to St. Luke. The name of the city has survived, with hardly any alteration, in the modern *Nein.* It lies on the north-western edge of the "Little Hermon" (the *Jebel-ed-Dâhy*) as the ground falls into the plain of Esdraelon. It is approached by a steep ascent, and on either side of the road the rock is full of sepulchral caves. It was on the way to one of these that the funeral procession was met by our Lord. We may reasonably infer that the miracle that followed was one which, from its circumstances, had specially fixed itself in the memories of the "devout women" of chap. viii. 1, and that it was from them that St. Luke obtained his knowledge of it. (See *Introduction.*)

(12) **The only son of his mother, and she was a widow.**—The two facts are obviously stated as enhancing the bitterness of the mother's sorrow. The one prop of her life, the hope of her widowhood, had been taken from her. The burial, as was the invariable practice in the East, took place outside the city.

out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. (13) And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. (14) And he came and touched the bier:[1] and they that bare *him* stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. (15) And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother. (16) And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people. (17) And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judæa, and throughout all the region round about. (18) And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.[a]

(19) And John calling *unto him* two of his disciples sent *them* to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? (20) When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? (21) And in that same hour he cured many of *their* infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many *that were* blind he gave sight. (22) Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John

[a] Matt. 11. 2.

[1] Or, *coffin.*

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(13) **And when the Lord saw her.**—The words are noticeable as being one of the comparatively few instances in which the term "the Lord" is used absolutely instead of Jesus. As far as it goes it confirms the view suggested in the previous Note, that the narrative came from those who had a profound reverence for the Master they had followed, and at a time when they had learnt thus to speak of Him. (Comp. the language of Mary Magdalene in John xx. 2, 13.) It may be noted further that this use of "the Lord" occurs more frequently in St. Luke and St. John than in the other Gospels. Comp. Luke vii. 31; x. 1; xi. 39; xii. 42; xvii. 5, 6; xix. 8; xxii. 61; John iv. 1; vi. 23; xx. 18, 20, 25; xxi. 7, 12. The last three or four references show that the disciples habitually used the same mode of speech, but it would not follow that in their lips it necessarily meant more at first than our "Sir," or "Master." After the Resurrection, doubtless, it rose to its higher meaning, as in the exclamations of St. Thomas (John xx. 28; comp. John xx. 25), and of St. John (John xxi. 7).

**He had compassion.**—Note, in this instance, as in so many others (*e.g.,* Matt. xx. 34; Mark i. 41), how our Lord's works of wonder spring not from a distinct purpose to offer credentials of His mission, but from the outflow of His infinite sympathy with human suffering.

(14) **He came and touched the bier.**—The noun so translated is used by classical authors in various senses. Here the facts make it clear that it was after the Jewish manner of burial. It was not a closed-up coffin, like the mummy-cases of Egypt, but an open bier on which the corpse lay wrapped up in its winding-sheet and swathing bands, as in the description of the entombment of Lazarus (John xi. 44) and of our Lord (John xx. 6, 7), with the *sudarium,* the napkin or handkerchief, laid lightly over the face. The immediate effect of the touch was that they who bore the bier "stood *still.*" They must have marvelled, that One who was known as a Teacher should touch that which most Rabbis would have avoided as bringing pollution, and their halting in their solemn march implied, perhaps, both awe, and faith that the touch could not be unmeaning.

(15) **He delivered him to his mother.**—Literally, *He gave him.* The mother was, probably, following at some little distance with the other mourners. As she came up she received her son as given to her once again, "God-given," in a higher sense then when she had rejoiced that a man-child was born into the world.

(16) **A great prophet.**—This, we must remember, was the first instance of our Lord's power as put forth to raise the dead, that of Jairus's daughter following in chap. viii. 40—56. In the history of the Old Testament there were examples of such wonders having been wrought by Elijah (1 Kings xvii. 22) and Elisha (2 Kings iv. 34), and the people drew the natural inference that here there was at least a prophet of the same order.

**That God hath visited his people.**—The same word as in chap. i. 68, 78, where see Notes.

(17) **This rumour of him went forth throughout all Judæa.**—Nain itself was in Galilee, and St. Luke apparently names Judæa, as wishing to show how far the fame of the miracle had spread.

(18—23) **And the disciples of John shewed him.**—See Notes on Matt. xi. 2—6. The fact, mentioned by St. Luke only, that the "disciples of John" reported these things, suggests some interesting coincidences: (1) It implies that they had been present at our Lord's miracles, and had heard His teaching, and we have seen them as present in Matt. ix. 14, Mark ii. 18. (2) It shows that though John was in prison, his disciples were allowed free access to him. (3) The fulness of St. Luke's narrative in verse 21 suggests the thought that St. Luke may have heard what he records from one of those disciples, possibly from Manaen (see *Introduction,* and Note on chap. vi. 1) the foster-brother of the Tetrarch.

(19) **Two of his disciples.**—According to some MSS. of St. Matthew, which give simply, *sent through His disciples,* St. Luke's account is the only one that gives the number of the disciples sent.

**Sent them to Jesus.**—Some of the best MSS. give, "to the Lord." (See Note on verse 13.)

(20) **He that should come.**—Literally, as in St. Matthew, *He that cometh,* or, *the coming One.*

(21) **And in that same hour he cured . . .**—The statement of the facts is peculiar to St. Luke, and obviously adds much force to our Lord's answer. He pointed to what was passing before the eyes of the questioners.

**Plagues.**—See Note on Mark iii. 10.

(22) **Go your way.**—The exact agreement of the answer as reported in the two Gospels is significant as to the impression which they made at the time on those who heard them.

what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. (23) And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

(24) And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind? (25) But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts. (26) But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. (27) This is *he*, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. (28) For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he. (29) And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. (30) But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected[1] the counsel of God against themselves,[2] being not baptized of him.

(31) And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation?[a] and to what are they like? (32) They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept. (33) For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. (34) The Son of man is come eating and drinking, and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! (35) But wisdom is justified of all her children.

(36) And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him.[b] And he went into the Pharisee's house, and

[1] Or, *frustrated.*

[2] Or, *within themselves.*

[a] Matt. 11. 16.

[b] Mark 14. 3.

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(24—35) **And when the messengers of John were departed.**—See Notes on Matt. xi. 7—19. The two narratives agree very closely. The few variations will be noticed as they occur.

(25) **They which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately.**—The words are more vivid than those in St. Matthew ("they that wear soft clothing"), and bring out the idea of ostentatious display and extravagant excess of luxury, as well as effeminate self-indulgence. Such forms of selfishness were common among the house of Herod and their followers. So Josephus describes the "royal apparel" of Agrippa (Acts xii. 21) as glittering with gold and silver tissues. The words must have gone home to some of the Herodians, and we may trace a touch of brutal vindictiveness in the "gorgeous" or "*bright* robe," in which they arrayed the Prophet of Nazareth when they had Him in their power. (See Notes on chap. xxiii. 11; Matt. xi. 8.)

(28) **There is not a greater prophet.**—St. Matthew's report is somewhat more emphatic, "there has not been raised up."

(29) **And all the people that heard him . . .**—Here the reports begin to vary, St. Luke omitting what we find in St. Matthew as to "the kingdom of heaven suffering violence;" and St. Luke interposing a statement, probably intended for his Gentile readers, as to the effect produced by the preaching of the Baptist on the two classes who stood at opposite extremes of the social and religious life of Judæa.

**Justified God.**—Better, perhaps, *acknowledged God as righteous.* The word is commonly applied in this sense to man rather than to God; but it appears so used in the quotation in Rom. iii. 4 from the LXX. version of Ps. li. 4. Here it has a special significance in connection with the statement that follows in verse 35, that "wisdom is justified of all her children."

(30) **Rejected the counsel of God against themselves.**—The English is unhappily ambiguous, admitting the construction that the counsel which the Pharisees rejected had been "against" them. Better, as in Gal. ii. 21, *frustrated for themselves the counsel of God.*

**Being not baptized . . .**—We read in Matt. iii. 7 that Pharisees and Sadducees came at first to the baptism of John, but they were repelled by the sternness of his reproof, and could not bring themselves either to confess their sins or to bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

(31—35) **Whereunto then shall I liken . . .**—See Notes on Matt. xi. 16—19. Some of the better MSS. omit the introductory words, "and the Lord said."

(33) **For John the Baptist came . . .**—The substantives "bread" and "wine" are not found in St. Matthew's report.

(36) **One of the Pharisees . . .**—We may reasonably infer that this was one of the better class of Pharisees who had a certain measure of respect for our Lord's teaching, and was half-inclined (comp. verse 39) to acknowledge Him as a prophet. Of such St. John tells us (xii. 42) there were many among the chief rulers. We find another example of the same kind in chap. xi. 37. Looking to the connection in which the narrative stands, it seems probable that the man was moved by the words that had just been spoken to show that he, at least, was among "the children of wisdom," and did not take up the reproach—"a gluttonous man and a winebibber." There is something very suggestive in our Lord's accepting the invitation. He did not seek such feasts, but neither would He refuse them, for there too there might be an opening for doing His Father's work.

**And sat down to meat.**—Literally, *He lay down.* This was the usual position in the East (see Note on sat down to meat. (37) And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, (38) and stood at his feet behind *him* weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed *them* with the ointment. (39) Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw *it*, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this is* that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. (40) And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master,

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Matt. xxvi. 20), and in this case we have to remember it in order to understand the narrative. We learn from verse 49 that there were other guests present. The Pharisee had probably invited his "friends and rich neighbours," and thought that he conferred an honour on the Prophet of Nazareth by asking Him to meet them.

(37) **A woman in the city, which was a sinner.**—The word is clearly used as pointing to the special sin of unchastity. The woman was known in the city as plying there her sinful and hateful calling. The question who she was must be left unanswered. Two answers have, however, been given. (1) The widespread belief that she was Mary Magdalene—shown in the popular application of the term "Magdalen" to a penitent of this class—has absolutely not a single jot or tittle of evidence in Scripture. Nor can there be said to be anything like even a tradition in its favour. The earliest Fathers of the Church are silent. Origen discusses and rejects it. Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine are doubtful. It first gained general acceptance through the authority of Gregory the Great. The choice of this narrative in the Gospel for the Feast of St. Mary Magdalene stamped it as with the sanction of the Western Church. The omission of that feast from the calendar of the Prayer Book of 1552 shows that the English Reformers at least hesitated, if they did not decide against it. We may note further (*a*) that if the popular belief were true we should have expected some hint of it on the occurrence of the name of Mary Magdalene in chap. viii. 3; (*b*) that the description given of that Mary, as one out of whom had been cast "seven devils," though not incompatible with a life of impurity, does not naturally suggest it; (*c*) that, on the assumption of identity, it is difficult to say when the "devils" had been cast out. Was it before she came with the ointment, or when our Lord spake the words, "Thy sins are forgiven thee?" It is obvious that the conduct of the woman in the Pharisee's house was very different from the wild frenzy of a demoniac. (2) The belief adopted by some interpreters, and more or less generally received in the Church of Rome, that the woman was none other than Mary the sister of Lazarus, who, on this hypothesis, is identified also with Mary Magdalene, is even more baseless. The inference that when St. John speaks of Mary of Bethany as "that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment," must refer to the previous anointing which St. Luke narrates, and not to that which St. John himself records (xii. 3), is almost fantastic in its arbitrariness; and it will seem to most minds inconceivable that such a one as the sister of Lazarus, who appears in chap. x. 42 as "having chosen the good part," could so shortly before have been leading the life of a harlot of the streets. Occurring as the narrative does in St. Luke only, it is probable enough that the "woman which was a sinner" became known to the company of devout women named in chap. viii. 1—3, and that the Evangelist derived his knowledge of the facts from them. His reticence—possibly their reticence—as to the name was, under the circumstances, at once natural and considerate.

**When she knew that Jesus . . .**—The words imply that she had heard of Him—perhaps had listened to Him. She may have heard of His compassion for the widow of Nain in her sorrow. She might have been drawn by the ineffable pity and tenderness of His words and looks. She would show her reverence as she could.

**Brought an alabaster box of ointment.**—See Note on Matt. xxvi. 7. There is not the same stress laid here, as in the anointing by Mary of Bethany, on the preciousness of the ointment; but we may believe that it was relatively as costly. Passages like Prov. vii. 17, Isa. iii. 24, suggest the thought that then, as perhaps in all ages, the lavish and luxurious use of perfumes characterised the unhappy class to which the woman belonged. The ointment may have been purchased for far other uses than that to which it was now applied.

(38) **And stood at his feet behind him.**—The common usage of the East left the court-yard of the house open while such a feast as that described was going on, and there was nothing to hinder one who had not been invited from coming even into the guest-chamber. It is possible, indeed, that the feast may have been intentionally open to all comers. Our Lord's position has to be remembered as we read the narrative.

**To wash his feet with tears.**—Many different emotions may have mingled in the woman's soul. Shame, penitence, gratitude, joy, love, all find the same natural relief. The word for "wash" should be noted as implying a "shower" of tears. It may be noted that while the tenses for this and the "wiping" imply a momentary act, those that follow for the kissing and anointing involve the idea of continuance. The act, the sobs, the fragrance of the ointment, of course attracted notice.

(39) **This man, if he were a prophet.**—The words show that the Pharisee had had a half-feeling of respect for our Lord as a teacher, that he at least knew that He was looked upon by the people as a prophet. There is traceable in what he says a tone of satisfaction at having detected what seemed to him inconsistent with the conception of a prophet's character. It is noticeable that he, like the woman of Samaria (John iv. 19), sees that character manifested, not merely in prediction, but in the power to read the secrets of men's lives and hearts. (Comp. 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25.) He knew what the woman was, and the so-called prophet did not.

(40) **And Jesus answering said . . .**—The answer was, as the context shows, to the unspoken thoughts of the Pharisee.

**Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee.**—The name of the Pharisee is thus given to us, but it say on. (41) There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. (42) And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? (43) Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he*, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. (44) And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head. (45) Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. (46) My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. (47) Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little. (48) And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

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was too common to suggest any identification. It is a somewhat singular coincidence that the two anointings should have happened (comp. Matt. xxvi. 6) each of them in the house of a Simon, but it cannot be looked on as more than accidental.

**Master, say on.**—The term used is one which implied recognition of our Lord's character as a teacher or Rabbi.

(41, 42) **There was a certain creditor . . .**—The parable has some points of resemblance to that of the Two Debtors in Matt. xviii. 23. Here, however, the debts, though different, are not separated by so wide an interval as are the ten thousand talents and the hundred pence. The debts are both within the range of common human experience. The "pence" are, of course, the Roman *denarii*, worth about sevenpence-halfpenny each. The application of the parable treats the woman as a greater debtor than the Pharisee. She had committed greater sins. Each was equally powerless to pay the debt—*i.e.*, to make atonement for his or her sins. Whatever hope either had lay in the fact that pardon was offered to both as a matter of free gift and bounty.

**Frankly.**—Better, *freely*—*i.e.*, gratuitously, as an act of bounty. So Shakespeare—

> "I do beseech your grace . . . .
> . . . . now to forgive me frankly."
> *Henry VIII.*, Act ii., Scene 1.

(43) **I suppose that he . . . .**—The same word occurs in the same sense as Acts ii. 15. As used here, it seems to carry with it a tone partly of indifference, partly of uneasiness and perplexity as to what the drift of the parable might be.

(44) **Thou gavest me no water for my feet.**—There had, then, been no real respect or reverence in the Pharisee's invitation. It was hardly more than an act of ostentatious patronage. It was honour enough for the carpenter's son to be admitted into the house. The acts of courtesy which were due to well-nigh every guest (comp. Notes on Matt. iii. 11; John xiii. 5; 1 Tim. v. 10), and which a Rabbi might expect as a thing of course, were, in his judgment, superfluous. Possibly the fact which afterwards drew down the censure of the Pharisees (Mark vii. 8) had already become known, and may have influenced Simon. If the new Teacher cared so little about ablutions, why take the trouble to provide them for Him?

(45) **Thou gavest me no kiss.**—This also, as we see in the case of Judas (see Note on Matt. xxvi. 49), was a customary mark of respect to one who claimed the character of a Rabbi. So the disciples of Ephesus kissed St. Paul on parting (Acts xx. 37). So the "holy kiss," the "kiss of peace," became part of the ritual of most of the ancient Liturgies (Rom. xvi. 16; 1 Cor. xvi. 20).

(46) **My head with oil thou didst not anoint.**—This also, though not so common as the kiss and the washing of the feet, was yet a mark of courtesy due to an honoured guest. For one who had journeyed to a feast under the burning sun of Syria, it brought with it a sense of comfort and refreshment which made it a fit type of spiritual realities. For the usage, see Pss. xxiii. 5, xlv. 7; Eccles. ix. 8. Partly because the use of oil or chrism became more directly symbolic in the ritual of the Christian Church—as in baptism, confirmation, extreme unction, the coronation of kings—partly because in other climates its necessity was not felt, the practice, as belonging to common life, has dropped into disuse. Note the contrast between the olive "oil," which was commonly used, and the more costly "ointment."

(47) **Her sins, which are many, are forgiven.**—Grammatically, the words admit of two interpretations, equally tenable. (1) Love may be represented as the ground of forgiveness, existing prior to it, and accepted as that which made forgiveness possible; or (2) it may be thought of as the natural consequence of the sense of being forgiven, and its manifestations as being therefore an evidence of a real and completed forgiveness. The whole drift of the previous parable is in favour of the latter explanation. The antecedent conditions of forgiveness, repentance, and faith—faith in Christ where He has been manifested to the soul as such; faith in Him as the Light that lighteth every man where He has not so been manifested—must be pre-supposed in her case as in others. And the faith was pre-eminently one that "worked by love," from the first moment of its nascent life. In such cases we may, if need be, distinguish for the sake of accuracy of thought, and say that it is faith and not love that justifies, but it is an evil thing to distinguish in order to divide.

Note in detail (1) that the tense used is the perfect, "Her sins . . . *have been* forgiven her;" (2) that the many sins of her past life are not, as we should say, ignored, but are admitted, as far as the judgment of the Pharisee was concerned, and pressed home upon her own conscience; (3) the thought subtly implied in the concluding words, not that the sins of the Pharisee were few, but that he thought them few, and that therefore the scantiness of his love was a witness that he had but an equally scant consciousness of forgiveness.

(48) **Thy sins are forgiven.**—Better, as before, *Thy sins have been forgiven.* The words throw light

(49) And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? (50) And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

CHAPTER VIII.—(1) And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve *were* with him, (2) and certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,[a] (3) and Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

[a] Mark 16. 9.

A.D. 31.

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upon the meaning and force of all like formulæ of absolution. It is, perhaps, matter for regret that any other formula, such as the *Absolvo te,* which dates, be it remembered, from the thirteenth century, has ever been substituted for them. They did not for the first time convey forgiveness. That had been, as the context indicates, sealed and assured before by an unspoken absolution. But they came as words of power from the great Absolver, to banish every lingering doubt or fear, to confirm every faint and trembling hope that had been kindled in the heart of the penitent. He knew the secrets of her soul, and could therefore affirm in the fulness of His knowledge that she fulfilled the conditions of forgiveness. Others, it is clear, can only so affirm in proportion as their insight approximates to His.

(49) **Who is this that forgiveth sins also?**—Better, *Who is this that even forgiveth sins?* The thought that underlay the question, though apparently the questioners were different, was the same as that which had found utterance when like words were spoken in the synagogue at Capernaum. (See chap. v. 21; Mark ii. 6; and Notes on Matt. ix. 3.)

(50) **Thy faith hath saved thee.**—From the merely controversial point of view these words have a value in ascribing the justification or salvation of the woman to faith, and not to love. Those who go deeper than controversy will find in them the further lesson that love pre-supposes faith. We cannot love any one —not even God—unless we first trust Him as being worthy of our love. She trusted that the Prophet of Nazareth would not scorn or reject her, and therefore she loved Him, and showed her love in acts, and, in loving Him, she loved, consciously or unconsciously, the Father that had sent Him.

**Go in peace.**—The Greek form is somewhat more expressive than the English. Our idiom hardly allows us to say "Go *into* peace," and yet that is the exact meaning of the original. "Peace" is as a new home to which the penitent is bidden to turn as to a place of refuge.

## VIII.

(1) **And it came to pass afterward.**—The last word is the same as that translated "in order," in chap. i. 3, and is interesting as showing the continuance of St. Luke's purpose to narrate events, so far as he could, in their exact sequence. He is the only writer in the New Testament who uses it. The verse sums up an undefined and otherwise unrecorded range of work.

(2) **And certain women.**—The words bring before us a feature in this period of our Lord's ministry not elsewhere recorded, though implied in chap. xxiii. 49. The Master and the disciples formed at this period one travelling company. When they arrived at town or village, they held what we, in the current Church-language of our time, should call a Mission, the Twelve heralding His approach, and inviting men to listen to Him as He taught in synagogue, or market-place, or open plain. Another company, consisting of devout women, mostly of the wealthier class, travelled separately, journeying, probably, in advance, arranging for the reception and the food of the Prophet and His followers. In the history of Elisha (2 Kings iv. 10) we have something analogous to this way of helping the preachers of repentance. It is said to have been a not uncommon practice in Judæa in our Lord's time, for women of independent means to support a Rabbi in his work as a teacher.

**Mary called Magdalene.**—On the legends and conjectures connected with her name, see Notes on chap. vii. 37 and Matt. xxvii. 56. Here it may be enough to note that (1) as being of Magdala, a town near Tiberias (see Note on Matt. xv. 39), she had probably heard our Lord in one of His early mission journeys; (2) that the "seven devils" or "demons" point, as in the parable of Matt. xii. 45, to a specially aggravated form of possession, with paroxysms of delirious frenzy, like those of the Gadarene demoniac; (3) that her presence with the mother of our Lord and St. John at the Crucifixion (John xix. 25) seems to imply some special tie either of sympathy or of earlier connection with them; (4) that she appears, from the names with which she is associated, and from the fact that she too "ministered of her substance," to have belonged to the more wealthy section of Galilean society. Later Western legends tell of her coming with Lazarus and Martha to Marseilles, and living for thirty years a life of penitence in a cave near Arles. The Eastern form of the legend, however, makes her come to Ephesus with the Virgin and St. John, and die there.

(3) **Joanna, the wife of Chuza.**—Here again we have a convert of the upper class. The name was the feminine form of Joannes, and appears in modern languages abbreviated into Joanne, Joan, or Jane. Nothing further is known of Chuza—but the "steward" (the same word as in Matt. xx. 8, and the "tutor" or "guardian" of Gal. iv. 2) of the Tetrarch, the manager of his income and expenditure, must have been a man of some mark. We may think of him and his wife as having probably come under the influence of the Baptist or of Manaen, the foster-brother of the Tetrarch, probably also of one of the "servants" to whom Antipas imparted his belief that John the Baptist was risen from the dead. Joanna appears again in the history of the Resurrection (chap. xxiv. 10). It is possible, as suggested in the Note on John iv. 46, that he may have been identical with the "nobleman" or "member of the royal household" at Capernaum. On this supposition her ministration may have been the result of overflowing gratitude for the restored life of her son.

**Susanna.**—The name, which meant a "lily" (comp. Rhoda, "a rose," in Acts xii. 13, and Tamar, "a palm," in Gen. xxxviii. 6, 2 Sam. xiii. 2, as parallel instances of feminine names derived from flowers or trees),

(4) And when much people were gathered together,[a] and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable: (5) A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. (6) And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. (7) And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. (8) And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. (9) And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? (10) And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. (11) Now the parable is this:[b] The seed is the word of God. (12) Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. (13) They on the rock *are they,* which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. (14) And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to perfection. (15) But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep *it,* and bring forth fruit with patience.

(16) No man, when he hath lighted a candle,[c] covereth it with a vessel, or

[a] Matt. 13. 2.
[b] Matt. 13. 18.
[c] Matt. 5. 15.

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meets us in the well-known Apocryphal addition to the Book of Daniel known as *Susanna and the Elders.* Nothing further is known of the person thus named.

**Many others.**—It seems clear that St. Luke must have come into personal contact with some, at least, of those whom he describes so fully. They were, we may well believe, among the "eye-witnesses and ministers of the word" (chap. i. 2) from whom he derived much of his information. (See *Introduction.*)

(4) **And when much people were gathered . . .**—The narrative is less precise than that in St. Matthew. It is possible that the parable may have been repeated more than once.

(5—15) **A sower went out to sow.**—See Notes on Matt. xiii. 3—23. Better, *the sower.* The vivid touch that the seed was "trodden down" is peculiar to St. Luke.

(6) **Upon a rock.**—Better, *upon the rock.* Note here also the use of a more accurate word than the "stony (or *rocky*) ground" of the other two reports, and the statement that it withered "because it lacked moisture." This is obviously not without its force in the spiritual interpretation of the parable, the "moisture" being the dew and rain of God's grace, without which the seed could not put forth its roots. This represents one aspect of what was lacking, as the having "no depth of earth" represents another.

(7) **The thorns sprang up with it.**—Here again there is a distinctive feature. What made the thorns so fatal to the good seed was that they "grew with its growth, and strengthened with its strength," and finally overpowered it.

(8) **Bare fruit an hundredfold.**—The graduated scale of fertility common to the other two reports is wanting in St. Luke, who dwells only on the highest.

(10) **That seeing they might not . . .**—St. Luke, like St. Mark, gives the words of Isaiah, but not as a quotation. On the difficulty presented by their form, as thus given, see Note on Mark iv. 12.

(11) **The seed is the word of God.**—This takes the place in St. Luke's interpretation of "the word of the kingdom" in St. Matthew. The "word of God" is obviously to be taken in its widest sense, as including every form by which a revelation from God is conveyed to the mind of man.

(12) **Then cometh the devil.**—Note St. Luke's use of this word instead of the "Satan" of St. Mark and "the wicked one" of St. Matthew, and his fuller statement of the purpose, "lest they should believe and be saved."

(13) **In time of temptation.**—The form of the temptation (or better, *trial*) is explained by the "tribulation or persecution" of the other two reports. So St. Luke gives "fall away" where the others give "they are offended."

(14) **Cares and riches and pleasures of this life.**—Better, simply, *of life,* St. Luke's word (*bios*) being different from that in the other two Gospels (*æon,* a time, or period—and so used for "the world"). The insertion of "pleasures" is peculiar to St. Luke, as is also the specific "bring no fruit to perfection" instead of "becometh unfruitful." The one Greek word which St. Luke uses, and for which the English version substitutes five, occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, and belonging, as it does, to the vocabulary of a more polished literature, is characteristic of his general culture.

(15) **In an honest and good heart.**—The Greek for "honest" has a somewhat higher meaning than that which now attaches to the English, and may be better expressed by *noble* or *honourable.* The two adjectives were frequently joined together by Greek ethical writers (*kalok'agathos*), the nobly-good, and so applied to the best forms of an aristocracy, or claimed by those who professed to represent it, to express the highest ideal of moral excellence.

**With patience.**—Better, *with perseverance,* or *steadfastness.* The word implies something more vigorous than the passive submission which we commonly associate with "patience." The thought is the same as in "he that endureth to the end" (Matt. x. 22; xxiv. 13), but the noun does not occur in the other Gospels. It occurs thirteen times in St. Paul's Epistles.

(16) **No man, when he hath lighted a candle.**—Better, *a lamp;* and for "a candlestick," *the lamp-*

putteth *it* under a bed; but setteth *it* on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light. (17) For nothing is secret,[a] that shall not be made manifest; neither *any thing* hid, that shall not be known and come abroad. (18) Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath,[b] to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.[1]

(19) Then came to him *his* mother and his brethren,[c] and could not come at him for the press. (20) And it was told him *by certain* which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. (21) And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

(22) Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples:[d] and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. (23) But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled *with water*, and were in jeopardy. (24) And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the

[a] Matt. 10. 26.

[d] Matt. 8. 23.

[b] Matt. 13. 12.

[1] Or, *thinketh that he hath.*

[c] Matt. 12. 46.

*stand.* See Notes on Matt. v. 15; Mark iv. 21. In St. Matthew the proverb comes into the Sermon on the Mount; in St. Mark it occupies a position analogous to that in which it stands here, and this agreement favours the view that it was actually spoken in connection with the interpretation of the parable, as a special application of what had before been stated generally.

Note St. Luke's more general term, "a vessel," instead of "the bushel," as in St. Matthew and St. Mark, and the somewhat wider range of the lamp's illumining power, not only to those who are "in the house," but to those also who are in the act of "entering" into it. We may, perhaps, venture to connect the choice of the latter phrase with St. Luke's personal experience as a convert from heathenism. As such, he had been among those that entered into the house; and as he did so, he had seen the light of the lamp which the Apostles of Christ had lighted.

(17) **For nothing is secret.**—Another of the maxims which were often in our Lord's lips, and applied as circumstances presented themselves. In Matt. x. 26 (where see Note) it forms part of the charge to the twelve Apostles; here it follows on the interpretation of the parable of the Sower; in chap. xii. 2 it points the moral of the uselessness of hypocrisy.

(18) **Take heed therefore how ye hear.**—This again meets us in different contexts. Here and in Matt. xiii. 12 (where see Note), after the interpretation of the Sower; in Matt. xxv. 29, as the lesson of the parable of the Talents; in Luke xix. 26, in an analogous position, as the lesson of the parable of the Pounds.

**That which he seemeth to have.**—Better, with the margin, as 1 Cor. x. 12, *that which he thinks he hath.* It is only in this passage that the close of the proverb takes this form. The man who does not use his knowledge has no real possession in it; and shallow and unreal as it is, he will lose even that. The work of education in all its many forms, intellectual or spiritual, in boyhood or manhood, presents but too many instances of the operation of this law.

(19—21) **Then came to him his mother and his brethren.**—See Notes on Matt. xii. 46—50, and Mark iii. 31—35. There cannot be any doubt that we have in those passages a report of the same incident; but it may be noted that St. Luke places it after the teaching by parables, and the other two Gospels before. In this instance the evidence preponderates in favour of the latter sequence of events.

**For the press.**—Better, *by reason of the multitude.*

(20) **It was told him by certain which said, . . .**—Better, more simply, *it was told Him.* Looking to the greater fulness of St. Mark's report, we may, perhaps, infer that this was one of the facts which St. Luke learnt from St. Mark when they met at Rome. (See *Introduction.*)

(21) **My mother and my brethren.**—The answer agrees very closely with that in the other Gospels. But note the use of "the word of God," instead of "the will of God" in St. Mark, and "the will of my Father" in St. Matthew, as throwing light on the meaning of the former phrase, and showing its fulness and width of meaning.

(22) **It came to pass on a certain day.**—See Notes on Matt. viii. 18, 23—27, and Mark iv. 35—41. Literally, *on one of the days.* The vagueness of St. Luke's note of time, as compared with the more precise statements in St. Matthew (viii. 18) and St. Mark (iv. 35), is perhaps characteristic of this Evangelist as an inquirer coming late into the field, aiming at exactness, not always succeeding in satisfying himself as to the precise sequence of events, and honestly confessing when he has failed to do so.

**Unto the other side of the lake**—*i.e.*, from the western to the eastern shore. It would seem from the Greek name of the district, Peræa (="the other-side country"), as if the term was a colloquial designation of the eastern shore, even without reference to the starting-point.

**The lake.**—The uniform use of the more accurate term by St. Luke as a stranger, as contrasted with the equally uniform use of the more popular and local designation of the "sea" in the other three Gospels, written by, or under the influence of, Galileans, is characteristic of one who may have been a student of Strabo. (See *Introduction.*)

(23) **He fell asleep.**—The verb so rendered differs from the "was asleep" of the other Gospels, and this is the only place of the New Testament in which it occurs. It is a somewhat more technical word, and is so far characteristic of the physician-historian.

**They were filled.**—Better, *they were filling,* the tense describing the process, not the completion.

(24) **Master, master.**—We note another characteristic feature of Luke's phraseology. The Greek word (*epistatès*) which he, and he only, uses in the New Testament, is his equivalent, here and elsewhere, for the "Rabbi" or "Master" (*didaskalos*), in the sense of "teacher," which we find in the other Gospels.

raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm. (25) And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

(26) And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes,[a] which is over against Galilee. (27) And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in *any* house, but in the tombs. (28) When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. (29) (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.) (30) And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him. (31) And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep. (32) And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them. (33) Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked. (34) When they that fed *them* saw what was done, they fled, and went and told *it* in the city and in the country. (35) Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. (36) They also which saw *it* told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed.

(37) Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again. (38) Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying, (39) Return to thine own house, and shew how

[a] Matt. 8. 28.

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St. Luke uses this word also, but apparently only in connection with our Lord's actual work as a teacher, and adopts *epistatès* (literally, *the head or president of a company*, but sometimes used also of the head-master of a school or gymnasium) for other occasions. It was, as this fact implies, the more classical word of the two.

**The raging of the water.**—Literally, the *wave* or *billow* of the water. The term is peculiar to St. Luke's Gospel.

(25) **What manner of man.**—Better, *Who then is this?*

**And water.**—Better, *and the water.*

(26—39) **And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes.**—See Notes on Matt. viii. 28—34, and Mark v. 1—20. Here again St. Mark and St. Luke agree in their order, and differ from St. Matthew. The better MSS. give "Gerasenes" or "Gergesenes." See Note on Matt. viii. 28 for the localities.

**Which is over against Galilee.**—St. Luke's description of the region, which the other two Gospels name without describing, is characteristic of a foreigner writing for foreigners.

(27) **And ware no clothes.**—The English is stronger than the Greek warrants. Better, *wore no cloak*, or *outer garment.* (Comp. Note on Matt. v. 40.) Singularly enough, St. Luke is the only Evangelist who mentions this fact. It is as though he had taken pains to inquire whether this case of frenzied insanity had presented the phenomenon with which his experience as a physician had made him familiar in others.

(28) **What have I to do with thee?**—Note the exact agreement with St. Mark's report rather than St. Matthew's, both as to there being but one demoniac, and as to the words used by him.

(29) **Driven of the devil . . .**—Better, *by the demon*, to show that it is still the unclean spirit, and not the great Enemy, that is spoken of.

**Into the wilderness.**—The Greek word is plural, as in chaps. i. 80, v. 16. St. Luke, it may be noted, is the only writer who so uses it.

(30) **Legion.**—Here again St. Mark and St. Luke agree.

(31) **To go out into the deep.**—Better, *into the abyss.* The word is not found in the other Gospels, and it clearly means, not the deep waters of the Galilean lake, but the pit, the "bottomless pit" of Rev. ix. 1, 2, 11. The man, identifying himself with the demons, asks for any doom rather than that.

(33) **Down a steep place.**—Better, *down the cliff.*

(34) **In the country.**—Better, *in the farms.* The noun is in the plural, and is so rendered in Matt. xxii. 5.

(35) **Sitting at the feet of Jesus.**—This feature is peculiar to St. Luke's narrative. The demoniac was now in the same attitude of rapt attention as that in which we find afterwards Mary the sister of Lazarus (chap. x. 39).

(36) **By what means . . .**—Better, *how;* stress being laid on the manner rather than the instrumentality.

(37) **They were taken with great fear.**—Better, *they were oppressed.*

(39) **Throughout the whole city.**—The city was, of course, according to the reading adopted, Gerasa, or Gadara.

great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him. (40) And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people *gladly* received him: for they were all waiting for him.

(41) And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue:[a] and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house: (42) for he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him.

a Matt. 9. 18.

(43) And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, (44) came behind *him*, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanched. (45) And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press *thee*, and sayest thou, Who touched me? (46) And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. (47) And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. (48) And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.

(49) While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's *house*, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. (50) But when Jesus heard *it*, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole. (51) And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. (52) And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth. (53) And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. (54) And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. (55) And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat. (56) And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

A.D. 31.

b Matt. 10. 1.

CHAPTER IX.—(1) Then he called his twelve disciples together,[b] and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. (2) And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. (3) And he said unto them, Take nothing for *your* journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece. (4) And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart. (5) And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them. (6) And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where.

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(40) **When Jesus was returned.**—The narrative implies that our Lord and His disciples re-crossed the lake from the eastern to the western shore, and that the crowd that waited belonged to Capernaum and the neighbouring towns.

(41—56) **And, behold, there came a man named Jairus.**—See Notes on Matt. ix. 18—26, and Mark v. 21—43. St. Luke's narrative agrees with St. Mark's more closely than with St. Matthew's.

(42) **About twelve years of age.**—St. Luke, as with the precision of a practised writer, names the age at the beginning of the narrative, St. Mark incidentally (v. 42) at its close.

(43) **Neither could be healed of any.**—It is, perhaps, worth noting that while St. Luke records the failure of the physicians to heal the woman, he does not add, as St. Mark does, that she "rather grew worse" (Mark v. 26).

(45) **Master.**—The same word as in verse 24, where see Note.

(46) **Somebody hath touched me.**—What St. Mark gives historically as a fact, St. Luke reports as uttered by our Lord Himself.

**That virtue is gone out of me.**—See Note on Mark v. 30. To St. Luke the word was probably familiar as a technical term.

(48) **Go in peace.**—See Note on chap. vii. 50.

(50) **Believe only.**—There is a slight difference in the shade of meaning of the Greek tense as compared with the like command in St. Mark's report, the latter giving "Believe" as implying a permanent state—*Be believing*—St. Luke's report laying stress on the immediate act of faith.

(51) **Save Peter, and James, and John.**—It will be noticed that St. Luke agrees with St. Mark in giving the names; St. Matthew omits them. St. Mark, however, states more definitely that none others were allowed even to go with Him.

(52) **All wept, and bewailed her.**—Better, *all were weeping and bewailing her.*

(55) **Her spirit came again.**—The precise form of expression is peculiar to St. Luke, and is, perhaps, characteristic of the more accurate phraseology that belonged to him as a physician.

IX.

(1—6) **Then he called his twelve disciples.**—See Notes on Matt. x. 5—15, and Mark vi. 7—13.

(3) **Neither staves.**—The better MSS. give, "neither a staff." The plural was probably adopted in order to bring the verse into harmony with Matt. x. 10, and Mark vi. 8.

(7) Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him:[a] and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead; (8) and of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again. (9) And Herod said, John have I beheaded: but who is this, of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him.

(10) And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.[b] (11) And the people, when they knew *it*, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing. (12) And when the day began to wear away,[c] then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place. (13) But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people. (14) For they were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company. (15) And they did so, and made them all sit down. (16) Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude. (17) And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets.

(18) And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him:[d] and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am? (19) They answering said, John the Baptist; but some *say*, Elias; and others *say*, that one of the old prophets is risen again. (20) He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God. (21) And he straitly charged them, and commanded *them* to tell no man that thing; (22) saying, The Son of man must

A.D. 32.

[a] Matt. 14. 1.

[d] Matt. 16. 13.

[b] Matt. 14. 13.

[c] Matt. 14. 15.

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(5) **A testimony against them.**—Better, *a testimony unto them.*

(6) **Went through the towns.**—Better, *villages*, as more consistent with the rendering of the word in Matt. xiv. 15.

(7—9) **Because that it was said of some, . . .**—See Notes on Matt. xiv. 1, 2; Mark vi. 14—16. In Matt. xiv. 2, and Mark vi. 14, Herod is represented as himself expressing this belief. St. Luke states, probably from his knowledge of the Herodian household (see *Introduction*), that it did not originate with him, and that his mind was, for a time, in suspense.

(9) **And he desired to see him.**—St. Luke returns (chap. xxiii. 8) to the working of this desire, which he apparently knew from sources that were not within the reach of the other Evangelists.

(10—17) **And the apostles, when they were returned.**—See Notes on Matt. xiv. 13—21, and Mark vi. 30—44.

(11) **Healed them that had need of healing.**—We cannot well alter the translation, but it may be noted that the word for "healing" is not formed from the same verb as "healed;" and is, as it were, a more technical word (used, with the one exception of Rev. xxii. 2, by St. Luke only) and equivalent to our "treatment."

(12) **And when the day began . . .**—Literally, *and the day began to wear away, and the Twelve came . . .*

**Into the towns and country.**—Better, as before (verse 6, chap. viii. 34), *the villages and farms.*

(13) **Buy meat.**—Better, *food.*

(14) **Make them sit down.**—Literally, *recline*, or *lie down.*

(17) **Twelve baskets.**—See Note on Matt. xiv. 20.

(18) **And it came to pass . . .**—St. Luke, it will be noted, omits the narrative of our Lord's walking on the water, of the feeding of the Four Thousand, of the Syro-Phœnician woman, and of the teaching as to the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. We cannot get beyond a conjectural explanation of these phenomena, but it is possible that, as a matter of fact, he simply did not learn these facts in the course of his inquiries, and therefore did not insert them. As far as it goes, the fact suggests the inference that he had not seen the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark in the form in which we now have them. On the narrative that follows (verses 18—27), see Notes on Matt. xvi. 13—28; Mark viii. 27; ix. 1.

**As he was alone praying.**—There is, as before (see *Introduction*, and Notes on chap. iii. 21, v. 16, vi. 12), something characteristic in the stress which St. Luke lays on the fact. It is as though he saw in what follows the result of the previous prayer.

(20) **The Christ of God.**—This precise form of expression is peculiar to St. Luke. It agrees substantially with "the Lord's Christ" of the song of Simeon (chap. ii. 26).

suffer many things,[a] and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

(23) And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me,[b] let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. (24) For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. (25) For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself,[c] or be cast away? (26) For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words,[d] of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and *in his* Father's, and of the holy angels. (27) But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.[e]

(28) And it came to pass[f] about an eight days after these sayings,[1] he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. (29) And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment *was* white *and* glistering. (30) And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: (31) who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. (32) But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. (33) And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. (34) While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. (35) And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. (36) And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept *it* close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

(37) And it came to pass,[g] that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him.

[a] Matt. 17. 22.

[b] Matt. 10. 38.

[c] Matt. 16. 26; Mark 8. 36.

[d] Matt. 10. 33.

[e] Matt. 16. 28.

[f] Matt. 17. 1.

[1] Or, *things.*

[g] Matt. 17. 14.

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(23–27) **If any man will come after me.**—See Notes on Matt. xvi. 24—28; Mark viii. 34; ix. 1.

**Take up his cross daily.**—The adverb is peculiar to St. Luke's report, and at least reminds us of St. Paul's "I die daily" (1 Cor. xv. 31).

(25) **And lose himself, or be cast away.**—Better, *destroy himself*, or *suffer loss.* The first word expresses a more direct act, as of self-destruction, and the second (see Note on Matt. xvi. 16) implies the thought of the forfeiture of something precious rather than of being absolutely rejected. It presents, so to speak, a slightly softened aspect of the previous words.

(26) **In his own glory, and in his Father's.**—The first part of the clause is peculiar, in this report of our Lord's words, to St. Luke, and presents a point of agreement with those recorded in John xvii. 5.

(28–36) **And it came to pass.**—See Notes on Matt. xvii. 1—13, and Mark ix. 2—13. St. Luke's way of reckoning, "about an eight days," where the other two Gospels give "after six days," is interesting, as throwing light on the mode of reckoning which sees three days in the interval between our Lord's death and resurrection. (See Note on Matt. xxvii. 63.)

(29) **And as he prayed.**—We again note, as characteristic of St. Luke, the stress laid upon our Lord's prayers here, as before in chaps. iii. 21, v. 16, vi. 12.

**The fashion of his countenance was altered.**—It is, perhaps, noticeable that the Evangelist who had the most classical culture avoids the use of the classical word "transfigured" or "metamorphosed," employed by the others. For him that word might have seemed too suggestive of the "metamorphoses" which the great work of Ovid had connected with the legends of Greek mythology.

(31) **Spake of his decease.**—St. Luke's is the only narrative that names the subject of the words that passed between our Lord and Moses and Elias. The use of the word "decease" (*exodos*) instead of "death" is remarkable: (1) because it had not been commonly so used by Greek authors; (2) because in its wider range of meaning it covered all the special phenomena connected with the close of the ministry of the Lawgiver and the Tishbite (comp. Deut. xxxiv. 5, 6; 2 Kings ii. 11), and not less so, the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord, as well as the Crucifixion; (3) as meeting us in close connection with a reference to the Transfiguration in 2 Pet. i. 15.

**Which he should accomplish.**—Literally, *which He was about to accomplish.*

(32) **But Peter . . . and when they were awake.**—The relations of the two clauses would be better expressed by, *And Peter . . . but awaked . . .*

(33) **Master.**—The same word as before, in chaps. v. 5, viii. 24, where see Notes.

(35) **This is my beloved Son.**—The better MSS. give "chosen." (Comp. the use of a like word in 1 Pet. ii. 4, 6.) Assuming this to have been the original reading, the "beloved" of the received text must have originated in the wish to produce a verbal as well as a substantial agreement with the other Gospels.

(37) **And it came to pass.**—See Notes on Matt. xvii. 14—21, Mark ix. 14—29. St. Luke's omission of the question and the teaching as to the coming of Elijah given by the other two Gospels is noticeable. There was no expectation of that coming among the Gentiles for whom he wrote. It was not necessary to correct that impression, or even to bring the difficulties which it suggested before their minds.

(38) And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee look upon my son: for he is mine only child. (39) And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him. (40) And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not. (41) And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither. (42) And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare *him*. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.

(43) And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God.

But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples, (44) Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.[a] (45) But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.

(46) Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest.[b] (47) And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him, (48) and said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

(49) And John answered and said, Master,[c] we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us. (50) And Jesus said unto him, Forbid *him* not: for he that is not against us is for us.

(51) And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. (52) And sent mes-

[a] Matt. 17. 22.

[b] Matt. 18. 1; Mark. 9. 34.

[c] Mark 9. 38.

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**Much people.**—Better, *a great multitude.*

(38) **A man of the company.**—Better, *a man from among the multitude.*

**Master.**—Here St. Luke uses the more common word, which means "teacher."

**He is mine only child.**—Note, as in the history of the widow of Nain (chap. v. 12), the tender sympathy shown in St. Luke's narrative. He is the only Evangelist who calls attention to the fact.

(43) **At the mighty power of God.**—The word so rendered is a somewhat remarkable one, and, like the *exodos* of verse 31, appears again in 2 Pet. i. 16 in close connection with a reference to the history of the Transfiguration. There it is rendered "majesty," and in Acts xix. 27 "magnificence." Here *greatness* would, perhaps, be the best equivalent. St. Luke describes the emotion which the men of the East feel when they say "God is great."

The division of verses here is singularly unfortunate. The new paragraph should clearly begin, as above, with the words, "But while they wondered."

(44—45) **Let these sayings sink down.**—See Notes on Matt. xvii. 22, 23, and Mark ix. 30—32. Literally, *Set these sayings in your ears;* but the English version is quite adequate as an idiomatic rendering.

**Shall be delivered.**—Literally, *is about to be delivered.*

(46) **Then there arose a reasoning among them.**—Better, *a dispute,* or *questioning.* See Notes on Matt. xviii. 1—5, and Mark ix. 33—41.

**Which of them should be greatest.**—Better, *which of them was the greatest.*

(47) **Took a child.**—Better, *laid hold on.*

(48) **For he that is least among you all.**—The addition in this place and this form are peculiar to St. Luke's report, but agree in substance with Mark ix. 35.

**The same shall be great.**—The better MSS. give, "the same *is* great," the greatness not being thrown forward as a compensation to be received in the far-off future, but thought of as actually attained in the midst of, and by means of, the seeming humiliation.

(49) **And John answered and said.**—See Notes on Mark ix. 38—41, the narrative being common to these two Gospels only.

**Master.**—The same word as in chaps. v. 5, viii. 24.

(51) **When the time was come that he should be received up.**—Literally, *When the days of His assumption were being fulfilled.* The noun is peculiar to St. Luke, and is derived from the verb used of the Ascension, in Mark xvi. 19, 1 Tim. iii. 16. It can here refer to nothing else, and the passage, as occurring in the midst of a narrative, is remarkable. It is as though St. Luke looked on all that follows as seen in the light of the Ascension. Every word and act was consciously a step forward to that great consummation.

(52) **And sent messengers before his face.**—It is remarkable that the words "Samaria" and "Samaritan" do not occur at all in St. Mark, and in St. Matthew in one passage only (Matt. x. 5), and then in the command given to the Twelve that they were not to enter into any city of the Samaritans. St. Luke, on the other hand, seems to have carried his inquiries into that country, and to have treasured up whatever he could find of our Lord's acts and words in relation to it. This seems accordingly the right place for a short account of the region and the people, and of their relations, in our Lord's time, to their neighbours of Judæa and Galilee. The city of Samaria (the modern *Sebastieh*) first comes into notice as built by Omri to be the capital of the kingdom of Israel (1 Kings xvi. 23, 24). It continued to occupy that position till its capture by Salmaneser, B.C. 721. After the deportation of the ten tribes, Esar-haddon (Ezra iv. 2, 10), after the manner of the great monarchs of the East, brought a mingled race from Babylon, and Cuthah, and Ava, and

sengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. (53) And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. (54) And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?[a] (55) But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. (56) For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save *them*. And they went to another village.

(57) And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain *man* said unto him,[b] Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. (58) And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head. (59) And he said unto another,[c] Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. (60) Jesus said unto him, Let the dead

[b] Matt. 8. 19.

[a] 2 Kings 1. 10.

[c] Matt. 8. 21.

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Hamath, and Sepharvaim (2 Kings xvii. 24), to occupy the district thus left depopulated, and from these the Samaritans of later history were descended. They were accordingly of alien races, and their neighbours of Judæa kept up the memory of their foreign origin by speaking of them as Cuthæans. Under the influence of a priest of Israel sent by the king of Assyria, they became worshippers of Jehovah (2 Kings xvii. 41), and on the return of Judah and Benjamin from the Captivity, they sought to be admitted as co-religionists, to share with them in the work of rebuilding the Temple, and therefore to obtain like privileges as worshippers in its courts. That claim was, however, refused, and they in return, B.C. 409, guided by Manasseh, a priest who had been expelled from Jerusalem by Nehemiah for an unlawful marriage with the daughter of Sanballat the Horonite (Neh. xiii. 28), obtained permission from the Persian king, Darius Nothus, to erect a temple on Mount Gerizim. Josephus, it should be added (*Ant.* xi. 7), places the whole story much later, in the time of Darius Nothus and Alexander the Great. The new worship thus started, placed them at once in the position of a rival and schismatical sect, and their after-history presented the usual features of such antagonism. They refused all hospitality to pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem, or would way-lay and maltreat them on their journey. They mocked the more distant Jews by false signals of the rising of the Paschal moon at Jerusalem. (See Note on chap. vi. 1.) They found their way into the Temple, and profaned it by scattering dead men's bones on the sacred pavement (Jos. *Ant.* xviii. 2, § 2; xx. 6, § 1). Outrages of this kind rankled in the memory of the Jews, and they, in their turn, looked on the Samaritans as worse than heathen, "had no dealings with them" (John iv. 9), cursed them in their synagogues, and even the wise of heart among them, like the son of Sirach, named them as a people that they abhorred (Ecclus. l. 25, 26). Probably in consequence of this bitter hostility, the Samaritans became more and more jealous in their observance of the Law, boasted that they possessed the authentic copy of it, substituted Gerizim for Ebal in Deut. xxvii. 4, to support its claim to sanctity, and maintained that it, and not the Temple at Jerusalem, was the chosen sanctuary of Jehovah. They too were looking for the Messiah, who would come as a prophet, and tell them all things (John iv. 25). Such was the relative position of the two races in the time of our Lord's ministry, and we cannot wonder that He should have shrunk (if we may so speak) from bringing His disciples at the outset of their work into contact with a people who hated all Jews, and whom all Jews had learnt to hate in return. He Himself, however, had not shrunk from that contact; and some few of the disciples, at all events, had, at an early period of His work, learnt that He saw in them those whom He owned as the sheep of His flock, though not of that fold. In the narrative now before us we find Him apparently endeavouring to continue the work which had then begun so successfully. (See Note on John iv. 39.)

(53) **They did not receive him.**—The reason thus given exactly agrees with what has been stated above. It will be remembered that when He had visited Samaria before, it was on His return, not directly from Jerusalem, but from some unknown region of Judæa where He had been baptising (John iii. 22; iv. 3).

(54) **When his disciples James and John saw this.**—The burning zeal of the sons of Zebedee, more fiery even than that of Peter, was eminently characteristic of those whom our Lord had named as the Sons of Thunder (Mark iii. 17). Their anger was probably heightened by the contrast with His former reception in a city of the same people (John iv. 40, 41), and by the feeling that what seemed to them an act of marvellous condescension was thus rudely repelled. Did not such a people deserve a punishment like that which Elijah had inflicted on the messengers of Ahaziah (2 Kings i. 10, 12, 14)? The latter words, "as Elias did," are, however, wanting in some of the best MSS.

(55) **Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.**—The words admit of two constructions: (1) that the disciples did not know that the Spirit that had been given "not by measure" to their Master, and promised by Him to them (Matt. x. 20; John iii. 34), was one of gentleness and love; (2) that they did not know that in yielding to what they thought a righteous anger, they were really yielding themselves to the evil mind, or the personal Evil Spirit which was at enmity with God. Looking to the general use of the word "spirit" in our Lord's teaching, the former way of taking the words seems, on the whole, preferable, and agrees better with what follows. The Spirit which had claimed them for its own was one that led Him to save and not to destroy. The whole clause, however, is wanting in the best MSS.

(56) **For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives.**—Here, again, we have to note the absence of the words from many of the better MSS. It is, perhaps, open to conjecture that they were inserted from an oral tradition that had preserved what the Evangelist in his written record had omitted.

(57—60) **Lord, I will follow thee.**—See Notes on Matt. viii. 19—22. The two anecdotes, if we may so call them, are placed by the two Evangelists in a very different connection. It is clear that their isolated, bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. (61) And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. (62) And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

CHAPTER X.—(1) After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place,[a] whither he himself would come. (2) Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly *is* great,[b] but the labourers *are* few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest. (3) Go your ways: behold,[c] I send you forth as lambs among wolves. (4) Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by

a Matt. 10. 1.
b Matt. 9. 37.
c Matt. 10. 16.
A.D. 32.

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fragmentary character, with no definite notes of time and place, left a large margin to the discretion of each compiler as to where they should appear. The difference between the "certain man" of St. Luke's report, and the "scribe" of St. Matthew's, slight as it is, takes its place among the signs of the mutual independence of the two Gospels.

(61) **Lord, I will follow thee.**—This third example of our Lord's method of dealing with half-hearted disciples is peculiar to St. Luke. Here, as in the first instance, there is what has the appearance of a spontaneous offer, coupled with a plea for postponement. The man pleads a wish to take a formal farewell of his kindred. The form of expression, the absence of any definite mention of father, or wife, or children, half-suggests the thought that the man was free from the closer and more binding ties of relationship, and that the plea urged was therefore hollow and unreal.

(62) **No man, having put his hand to the plough . . .**—The image which our Lord used was, as usual, one that went home to the personal experience of His hearers. They were of the peasant class, and they knew that the eye of the ploughman if he is to do his work well, must look straight before him at the line of the furrow which he is making. To look back, while working, is to mar the work entirely. The man who so looks is therefore, *ipso facto*, disqualified for the work of God's kingdom.

## X.

(1) **After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also.**—Some MSS. of importance give "seventy-two," but the evidence preponderates in favour of the reading "seventy." The number had a threefold significance. (1) Seventy elders had been appointed by Moses to help him in his work of teaching and judging the people (Num. xi. 16), and to these the spirit of prophecy had been given that they might bear the burden with him. In appointing the Seventy our Lord revived, as it were, the order or "school" of prophets which had been so long extinct. The existence of such men in every Church is implied in well-nigh every Epistle (*e.g.*, Acts xiii. 1; xv. 32; 1 Cor. xii. 28; xiv. 29; 1 Thess. v. 20), and the fact that St. Paul and others join together the "Apostles and Prophets" as having been jointly the foundation on which the Church was built (Eph. ii. 20; iii. 5; iv. 11; 2 Pet. iii. 2), makes it probable that the latter words, no less than the former, pointed in the first instance to a known and definite body. The Seventy presented such a body. They, though not sharers in the special authority and functions of the Twelve, were yet endowed with like prophetic powers, and the mysteries of the kingdom were revealed to them (verse 21). (2) As the Sanhedrin or great Council of scribes and priests and elders consisted of seventy members besides the president, the number having been fixed on the assumption that they were the successors of those whom Moses had chosen, our Lord's choice of the number could hardly fail to suggest the thought that the seventy disciples were placed by Him in a position of direct contrast with the existing Council, as an assembly guided, not by the traditions of men, but by direct inspiration. (3) But the number seventy had come to have another symbolical significance which could not fail to have a special interest. Partly by a rough reckoning of the names of the nations in Gen. x., partly on account of the mystical completeness of the number itself, seventy had come to be the representative number of all the nations of the world; and so, in the Feast of Tabernacles, which in any harmonistic arrangement of the Gospel narrative must have almost immediately preceded the mission of the Seventy (see Note on John vii. 2), a great sacrifice of seventy oxen was offered as on behalf of all the non-Israelite members of the great family of mankind (Lightfoot, *Hor. Hebr. in Joann.* vii.). Bearing this in mind, and remembering the words that our Lord had spoken during that feast as to the "other sheep, not of that fold" (John x. 16), which He had come to gather, we may see in what is here recorded a step full of meaning, a distinct and formal witness of the future universality of the Church of Christ. The omission, in the charge addressed to them, of the command given to the Twelve against entering into the way of the Gentiles or any city of the Samaritans (Matt. x. 5) is on this view full of interest.

The question, of course, occurs to us how it was that such a mission should have been omitted by St. Matthew and St. Mark. To this, only partial answers can be given. (1) The mission belonged to the last period of our Lord's ministry, where their records are comparatively scanty, and was confined to the region, apparently of Peræa and Judæa, which He was then about to visit. (2) It was one in which, from the nature of the case, the Twelve were not sharers, and which, therefore, naturally came to occupy a less prominent place in the recollections of those from whom the narratives of the first two Gospels were primarily derived.

(2) **The harvest truly is great.**—See Note on Matt. ix. 37. The verses that follow contain, as might have been expected from the analogous circumstances, much in common with those spoken on the mission of the Twelve. We have here, as in the sermons on the Mount and on the Plain, an example of our Lord's repeating the expression of the same thoughts in nearly the same language.

(3) **As lambs among wolves.**—See Note on Matt. x. 16.

(4) **Carry neither purse, nor scrip.**—See Notes on Matt. x. 9, 10; Mark vi. 8.

the way. (5) And into whatsoever house ye enter,[a] first say, Peace *be* to this house. (6) And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again. (7) And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house. (8) And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: (9) and heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. (10) But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, (11) Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. (12) But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city. (13) Woe unto thee, Chorazin![b] woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. (14) But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you. (15) And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell. (16) He that heareth you heareth me;[c] and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.

(17) And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. (18) And he said unto them, I beheld

[a] Matt. 10. 12.

[b] Matt. 11. 21.

[c] Matt. 10. 40.

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(5—7) **Peace be to this house.**—See Notes on Matt. x. 12, 13. St. Luke gives, what is only implied in St. Matthew, the very form of the salutation.

(7) **And in the same house remain.**—See Note on Matt. x. 11.

**The labourer is worthy of his hire.**—See Note on Matt. x. 10. The exact reproduction of the words by St. Paul in 1 Tim. v. 18, as a citation from "the Scripture," is every way interesting. The Apostle could scarcely have failed to have become acquainted, during his long companionship with St. Luke, with the materials which the Evangelist was collecting for his great work. We can hardly doubt, accordingly, that he quotes this as one of the sayings of the Lord Jesus, as he quotes another in Acts xx. 35, and clothes it with the same authority as the older Scripture. On this assumption, the Gospel of St. Luke must have been, in part, at least, written and recognised at the time when the Pastoral Epistles were written.

(8) **Eat such things as are set before you.**—The precise form of the precept is peculiar to St. Luke, but the spirit is the same as that of the words which had been spoken to the Twelve. The Evangelist preachers were to accept whatever was provided for them by a willing host, and to avoid even the appearance of caring for outward comforts.

(9) **The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.**—Here again the form of the words is peculiar to St. Luke. This was to be the burden of those who, as preachers, were, in the strictest sense, the heralds of the great King.

(10, 11) **Into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not.**—See Notes on Matt. x. 13.

(11) **Be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.**—There is something very solemnly impressive in the fact that this is the message to be uttered alike to the believing and the unbelieving. Now, as of old, the prophets of the Lord had to utter their proclamation, whether men would hear or whether they would forbear (Ezek. ii. 7).

(12) **It shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom.**—See Note on Matt. x. 15.

(13—16) **Woe unto thee, Chorazin!**—See Notes on Matt. xi. 21, where the words appear as spoken at an earlier period. We have again to choose between the two alternative views, (1) that the words were spoken but once, and floated in men's memories without any very definite note of time or place, and were wrongly placed by one, or, possibly, by both Evangelists; or (2) that they were repeated on different occasions. The latter seems, on the whole, by far the more probable.

(16) **He that heareth you heareth me.**—See Note on Matt. x. 40. Another fragment of our Lord's teaching meets us under the same conditions as before.

(17) **And the seventy returned again with joy.**—It is obvious from the immediate sequence of the two facts that the mission of the Seventy was, as stated above, confined within narrow limits of space and time.

**Lord, even the devils are subject unto us.**—Better, *the demons.* The tone in which the disciples speak is that of a joyful surprise. They had not looked for such great and immediate results. They had thought that the power to cast out demons had been confined to our Lord's immediate action or to that of the Twelve, and they found that they too possessed the power to rescue the spirits of men from thraldom. With them, as with others, the consciousness of a new power was attended with a new pleasure, in this case, with that of high spiritual exultation.

(18) **I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.**—The tense of the first Greek verb implies continuous action: *I was beholding Satan as he fell . . .* While they were working their Master had been following them in spirit, gazing, as it were, on each stage of their victorious conflict. Their triumph over the demons was the beginning and the earnest of a final conquest over Satan as "the prince of the demons." There may, possibly, be a reference to the belief then beginning to be current among the Jews as to the fall of Satan after his creation; but the primary meaning of our Lord's words is that he was now dethroned from his usurped dominion in the "high places" (comp. Eph. vi. 12), which symbolised the spiritual region of the soul and mind of man. The imagery reappears in a developed form in Rev. xii. 9.

Satan as lightning fall from heaven. (19) Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. (20) Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

(21) In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. (22) All things are delivered to me of my Father:[1] and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and *he* to whom the Son will reveal *him.*

(23) And he turned him unto *his* disciples, and said privately, Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things that ye see:[a] (24) for I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen *them;* and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard *them.*

(25) And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?[b] (26) He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? (27) And

[a] Matt. 13. 16.

[b] Matt. 22. 35.

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[1] Many ancient copies add these words, *And turning to his disciples, he said.*

(19) **Behold, I give unto you . . .**—The better MSS. have, "I have given," as of something already bestowed in its completeness. In the power to "tread on serpents and scorpions," we have a manifest reference to the words of Ps. xci. 13. Those words stand in closest sequence with the promise which had been wrested from its true meaning by the Tempter in the great struggle in the wilderness; and it is not over-bold to think that they were connected with our Lord's memories of that time, and especially of the fact indicated by St. Mark's statement (i. 13) that He "was with the wild beasts." Now, through resistance to the Temptation, there had come the victory which if He had then yielded, never would have been won. Of a literal fulfilment of the words, St. Paul's escape from the viper at Melita (Acts xxviii. 3) is the only recorded instance; but the parallelism between this promise and that of Ps. xci. 13 shows that the literal meaning falls into the background, that the serpent and the scorpion are symbols of spiritual powers of evil. A merely literal interpretation lands us in two serious difficulties: (1) that it represents the treading on serpents as a greater work than casting out demons; and (2) that it implies that serpents and scorpions, as such, are not part of God's creation, but belong to the power of the Evil One. So far as we think of a literal fulfilment at all, it can only be as the symbol and earnest of the spiritual. The real kernel of the promise lies in the last words, "Nothing shall by any means hurt you," and these find their interpretation in the thought that "nothing shall separate us from the love of God," and that "all things work together for good to those that love Him" (Rom. viii. 39, 28).

(20) **Notwithstanding in this rejoice not.**—Above all exercise of power was the consciousness of the divine life, the feeling that they had a Father in heaven who had, to speak after the manner of men, registered their names as citizens of His kingdom. That was the great blessing for them, and for all believing souls after them. The words leave open the question whether that registration conferred a title which they could not forfeit, and the current language of the Old Testament—the prayer of Moses, "Blot me out of Thy book" (Ex. xxxii. 32), the warnings of Ex. xxxii. 33, Deut. ix. 14, xxix. 20—would suggest the thought that even here the joy was to be tempered with fear and trembling. The reappearance of a like promise in Rev. iii. 5 as the reward of obedience, and therefore conditioned by it, no less than the general tenor of the teaching of the Epistles (1 Cor. ix. 27; Gal. ii. 21; 2 Pet. i. 10), confirms this interpretation. It may be noted (1) that the better MSS. omit the word "rather," and introduce the second clause abruptly—"Rejoice that your names are written . . .;" and (2), as implied above, that the root-thought of the image is that of a king taking the census of those who are citizens of his kingdom, as distinguished from aliens and foreigners. In Ps. lxxxvii. 4, 5, we have a memorable instance at once of the literal fact and of its spiritual application.

(21, 22) **In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit.**—The words that follow are found also in Matt. xi. 25—27 (see Notes on those verses), but the opening clause that introduces them is peculiar to St. Luke, and is noticeable as the one instance where the word "rejoiced," which appears in the Magnificat (chap. i. 47), is used of our Lord's human feeling of exultation. It indicates what one may call the enthusiasm of spiritual joy more than any other synonym, and conveys the impression that the disciples must have noticed something exceptional in their Lord's look and manner. The verbal agreement with St. Matthew indicates that both the Evangelists must have drawn from a common source, documentary or oral.

(22) **All things are delivered to me.**—The marginal reading, which prefixes "And turning to His disciples" to this verse instead of the next, can hardly be regarded as more than a transcriber's error.

(23—24) **Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see . . .**—Another instance of repeated words, St. Matthew reporting them as spoken after the parable of the Sower (Matt. xiii. 16. See Note on that verse).

(24) **Many prophets and kings . . .**—There is a slight verbal difference here as compared with St. Matthew's report, which gives "prophets and righteous men."

(25) **And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up.**—On the word "lawyer" and its difference from the more generic "scribe," see Note on Matt. xxii. 35. Here, as there, the "tempting" does not necessarily imply hostile purpose. It was simply a test-question to see if the new Teacher was sound in His view of the ethical obligations of the Law.

The question, though the same as that of the young man in Matt. xix. 16, is not asked in the same tone.

he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. (28) And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. (29) But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? (30) And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead. (31) And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. (32) And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side. (33) But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*, (34) and went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own

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There it was asked by one anxiously seeking to inherit eternal life. Here there is a certain tone of self-conscious superiority, which required a different treatment. As the method of Socrates was to make men conscious of their ignorance of the true meaning of words which they repeated glibly, so here our Lord parries the question by another, makes him repeat his own formulated answer—an answer true and divine itself, identical with that which our Lord gave Himself (Matt. xxii. 37)—and then teaches him how little he had realised its depth and fulness. The commandment was "exceeding broad" above all that the teacher of Israel had imagined.

(28) **Thou hast answered right.**—The acceptance of the lawyer's answer as theoretically true was part of the method of our Lord's teaching. The words that followed, "This do, and thou shalt live," were those of a Prophet who knew what was in the man, and read the secrets of his heart, and saw how little love was to be found there. In the command "*This do . . .*," however, our Lord does something more than accommodate Himself to the legal point of view. Love was really life, at once its source and its manifestation, if only the love were true, and the test of its being true was action.

(29) **But he, willing to justify himself . . .**—The question implied a conscience half-awakened and uneasy. It is characteristic that no doubt seems to cross his mind as to his love of God. There he felt that he was safe. But there were misgivings as to the second commandment, and, as if feeling that there had been a tone of rebuke in our Lord's answer, he vindicates himself by asking the question, "Who is my neighbour?" No one, he thinks, could accuse him of neglecting his duties to those who lived in the same village, attended the same synagogue, who were Pharisees like himself, or even Israelites.

(30) **A certain man went down.**—Better, *was going down*. We enter here upon the first of a series of parables, which differ from those in St. Matthew in having more the character of actual human histories, illustrating a truth, rather than mere similitudes ("parables" in the usual sense of the word) composed for the purpose of illustration. There is obviously no reason why we should not believe them to have been (as in one case the mention of a proper name seems to imply, Lazarus, in chap. xvi. 20) statements of facts that had actually happened, and which had come under our Lord's observation as He travelled on His work of preaching the gospel of the Kingdom.

**From Jerusalem to Jericho.**—The journey was one of about twenty-one miles, for the most part through a rocky and desert country, with caves that were then haunted by bands of robbers, as they have been, more or less, in later times by predatory Arabs. In Jerome's time it was known as the "red" or the "bloody" way, in consequence of the frequency of such crimes.

**Fell among thieves.**—Better, *robbers*, as elsewhere.

(31) **By chance . . .**—The passage is the only one in the New Testament in which the phrase occurs. Our Lord seems to use it as with a touch of what we have elsewhere termed irony. It seemed so casual, as such opportunities always do to men who neglect them, and yet it was, in the purpose of God, the test-moment of each man's character and life.

**There came down.**—Better, as before, *there was going down*.

**A certain priest.**—Jericho was at this time a priestly city, and so the journey of the priest from Jerusalem, as if returning from his week of sacerdotal offices there, has a touch of vivid naturalness. He, too, like the questioner, had been doing his duty to God, according to his measure of that duty.

**Passed by on the other side.**—The priest shrank, it might be, (1) from the trouble and peril of meddling with a man whom robbers had just attacked, and (2) from the fear of incurring a ceremonial defilement by coming into contact with what might possibly be a corpse before he reached it. He accordingly "passed by on the other side," not of the road only, but of the ravine through which the road passed.

(32) **Likewise a Levite.**—The passage is memorable as the only mention of Levites in the Gospels. He is represented as at once better and worse than the priest—better in that he does not altogether turn aside, but "comes" and looks; worse in that his second thoughts are at variance with his first, and prevail against them. If he has more light, he also sins more against it. He, too, may have been coming, like the priest, from his week of service in the Temple.

(33) **A certain Samaritan.**—For the chief facts connected with the Samaritans and their relation to the Jews, see Note on chap. ix. 52. There is something noticeable in the change of word. It was not likely that the hated alien should be coming down from Jerusalem. His journey would probably be to, or from, Bethel and Gerizim. He was not, as the others were, near a home to which they might have taken the wounded sufferer. Here there is a true human feeling in one who outwardly was involved in heresy and schism, and our Lord singles that out as infinitely preferable to the form of godliness without its power.

(34) **And went to him.**—Every detail is in harmony with the tender pity described in the previous verse. All fear of risk from robbers, or from the police of Rome, who might take him for a robber, is put aside; the

beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. (35) And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence,[1] and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. (36) Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? (37) And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

(38) Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha

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"oil and wine," which had been provided for personal refreshment, are freely given to be used, according to the primitive surgery of the time, the latter for cleansing the wounds, the former for soothing inflammation. His own beast (better, *ass,* as the word is translated in Matt. xxi. 5; 2 Pet. ii. 16) is given up, and he goes on foot; he takes the wounded man to an inn, and there provides for him.

**To an inn.**—The word is not the same as that in chap. ii. 7, and implies the Western type of hostelry, where the landlord provides for his guests, while in the earlier passage we have the Eastern caravanserai, where the guests simply find shelter, and arrange their meals for themselves.

(35) **Two pence**—*i.e., two denarii,* according to Matt. xx. 2 the average wages of a labourer for two days; or, taking the estimate of Mark vi. 37, enough for a meal of twenty-five men. It was therefore a sufficient and liberal provision for all probable contingencies. This, however, was not, in the Samaritan's judgment, enough, and he gave a *carte blanche* for whatever else might be required.

(36) **Which now of these three . . . ?**—There is a certain subtle discernment in the form of the question. The point under discussion was as to whom the Jew should look on as his neighbour. It is answered indirectly by the narrative, which showed who had proved himself a neighbour to the Jew. The Samaritan had shown himself a better interpreter of the commandment than the orthodox scribe. He had recognised a neighbour even in the Jew. The Jew therefore should recognise a neighbour even in the Samaritan. From the human point of view there is something noble in the manner in which our Lord thus singles out the Samaritan as a type of excellence, after His own recent repulse (chap. ix. 53) by men of the same race; something also courageous in His doing so after He had been recently reproached as being Himself a Samaritan (John viii. 48). It may be noted that His journey, "as it were in secret" (John vii. 10), to the Feast of Tabernacles, must have probably led Him through Samaria, and that in all probability He must have spent the first day of the Feast in that country. (See Note on John viii. 48.)

(37) **Go, and do thou likewise.**—This was the practical, though not the formal, answer to the question of the lawyer. If he acted in the spirit of the Samaritan, he would need no "nicely-calculated less or more" of casuistic distinctions as to who was and who was not his neighbour. Fellowship in the same human nature, and any kind of even passing contact, were enough to constitute a ground for neighbourly kindness. Of such a question it may be said, *Solvitur amando.* We love, and the problem presents no difficulty.

Nothing should lead us away from recognising this as the main lesson of the parable. But there is another application of it which, within limits, is legitimate enough as a development of thought, and which has commended itself to so many devout minds, both in ancient and modern times, that it at least deserves a notice. Christ Himself, it is said, is the great pattern of a wide, universal love for man as man, acting out the lesson which the parable teaches in its highest form. May we not think of Him as shadowed forth in the good Samaritan, as accepting, in that sense, the name which had been flung at Him in scorn? Starting from this thought, the circumstances fit in with a strange aptness. The traveller stands as representing mankind at large. The journey is from Jerusalem, the heavenly city, the paradise of man's first estate, to Jericho, the evil and accursed city (Josh. vi. 17), the sin into which man entered by yielding to temptation. The robbers are the powers of evil, who strip him of his robe of innocence and purity, who smite him sore, and leave him, as regards his higher life, half-dead. The priest and the Levite represent the Law in its sacrificial and ceremonial aspects, and they have no power to relieve or rescue. The Christ comes and helps where they have failed. The beast on which He rides is the human nature in which the Word dwelt, and it is upon that humanity of His that He bids us rest for comfort and support. The inn represents the visible Church of Christ, and the host its pastors and teachers; even the two pence, perhaps, the ordinances and means of grace committed to the Church. There is an obvious risk, in all such application, of an element that is fantastic and unreal; but the main line of parallelism seems to commend itself, if not to the reason, at least to the imagination of the devout interpreter.

(38) **He entered into a certain village.**—The identity of the two names that follow, and, we may add, of the characters connected with the names, leaves hardly room for doubt that the village thus spoken of was Bethany. (See Note on Matt. xxi. 1.) St. Luke's reason for not giving the name is probably connected with the singular reticence of the first three Gospels as to the family of Lazarus. St. Matthew (xxvi. 7) and St. Mark (xiv. 3) narrate the anointing, which we learn from John xii. 3 to have been the act of Mary, but suppress her name. St. Luke gives, in this section, a characteristic anecdote of the two sisters, but suppresses the name of the village in which they lived. None of the first three Gospels name Lazarus, though there seems some reason to believe that the first two narrate a fact in which he took a prominent part (see Note on Matt. xix. 16), and that the third gives the name with a special reference to him. (See Note on chap. xvi. 20.) A probable explanation is that, both on spiritual and perhaps social grounds, reticence as to the family of Bethany was, for a time, generally maintained among the disciples of Jerusalem, and that St. Luke, coming at a later period, and finding his way, as a physician, into the company of devout women, named one fact that seemed of special interest. (See *Introduction,* and Note on chap viii. 1.)

**Martha.**—The name does not appear in the Old Testament, and is Aramaic rather than Hebrew. It has a point of contact with secular history in having received him into her house. (39) And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. (40) But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. (41) And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: (42) but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

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[1] See Matt. 20. 2.

A.D. 33.

CHAPTER XI.—(1) And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples

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been borne by the Syrian prophetess who accompanied the Roman general, Marius, in his Numidian campaigns. Its meaning, as the feminine of *Maran* (= Lord), and therefore equivalent to the Greek *Kyria*, suggests the possible identity of the sister of Lazarus with the elect Kyria (or elect Lady), to whom St. John addressed his second Epistle. (See Note on 2 John 1.)

(39) **A sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet.**—The better MSS. give, "at the Lord's feet." Few readers can fail to notice the identity of character here and in the entirely independent narratives of John xi. and xii. There also Martha is active (John xi. 20) and conspicuous in serving (John xii. 2); Mary, meditative and emotional, pouring her whole soul into one act of love (John xi. 31; xii. 3).

(40) **Martha was cumbered.**—Literally, *was distracted;* drawn hither and thither by conflicting cares.

**About much serving.**—We may probably infer from this that our Lord had been invited as an honoured guest, and that Mary had been asked to meet Him; and, so far, the narrative agrees with what is suggested by the narrative of John xi. as to the social position of the household at Bethany. The use of a like word in chap. xii. 42 suggests that this also may have passed from the abstract to the concrete sense, and have been used for a *household* of many servants as well as for the act of serving.

**Came to him.**—The Greek word implies something like a hasty movement to interrupt the calm tenor of the Lord's discourse. The hasty vehement complaint that follows is quite in keeping with this.

**That she help me.**—More literally, *that she join in helping.*

(41) **And Jesus answered.**—The better MSS. give, "And *the Lord* answered." (See Note on chap. vii. 13.)

**Martha, Martha.**—We note a special tenderness of reproof in the two-fold utterance of the name, of which this and the like iteration of "Simon, Simon," in chap. xxii. 31, are the only examples in our Lord's recorded utterances during His earthly ministry. (Comp. "Saul, Saul," in Acts ix. 4.)

**Thou art careful.**—The verb is the same as the "take thought" of Matt. vi. 25, and throws light upon the meaning of that phrase.

(42) **But one thing is needful.**—Some of the better MSS. present a singular various-reading, *There is need of few things, or of one only.* It is obvious that this might be taken either literally or spiritually. They might mean (1) that He who spoke, and the others who were coming, needed not the many things about which Martha was troubled, but a few only, or even but a single dish, to supply their wants; or (2) that the true life of men needed but a few things, such as faith, obedience, the fear of God, or even but one only, the devout and intent love which Mary was then showing. The latter interpretation is clearly most in harmony with our Lord's usual teaching, though the former has something like a parallel in the teaching of verse 7 of this very chapter. It is not improbable that our Lord designedly used words which had an outer and an inner meaning, the latter intended chiefly for those who "had ears to hear." There is a singular coincidence between the words here spoken to Martha and those addressed to the young ruler ("one thing thou lackest"), whom we have seen reason to identify with her brother. (See Note on Matt. xix. 16.) The omission of "few things" in the received text, may have originated in the wish to give an exclusive prominence to the higher meaning.

**Mary hath chosen that good part.**—The Greek noun is very nearly the same as that which the younger son, in chap. xv. 12, uses for "the portion of goods," the good part or portion here being nothing less than the eternal life which is the gift of God. Here too we may trace something approaching to a half-playful mingling of the higher and lower meanings of the word which was used in the Greek version of the Old Testament at once for Benjamin's mess, *i.e.*, portion of food (Gen. xliii. 34), and for God as the "portion" of His people (Ps. lxxiii. 26). Even on the assumption that our Lord spoke in Aramaic, and not in Greek, a like play upon the word would have been equally possible.

The two sisters have come to be regarded as the representatives respectively of the active and the contemplative forms of the religious life, and there is, of course, a certain measure of truth in this view. On the other hand, however, it must be remembered that Martha's activity, with its manifold distractions, was not Christian activity, and that Mary's contemplation passed, when the time came for it, as in John xii. 3, into full and intense activity. The contrast is rather that between singleness of heart and the character which St. James describes as "double-minded" (Jas. i. 8), *i.e.*, divided in its affections.

## XI.

(1) **As he was praying in a certain place.**—The facts of the case as here narrated, the common practice of the Jews, and the analogy of the prayers in John xi. 41, Matt. xxvi. 39, and, we may add, of the thanksgiving in chap. x. 21, Matt. xi. 25, all lead to the conclusion that our Lord prayed aloud, and that some, at least, of the disciples heard Him. They listened, unable to follow, or to record what they had heard, and they wished to be able to enter into His spirit and pray as He prayed.

**Teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.**—It seems, at first sight, to follow from this that the disciple who asked this had not been present when the Sermon on the Mount was spoken. It is conceivable, however, that, knowing the pattern prayer which had then been given, he had thought it adapted for the multitude, and not for the special scholars and disciples—too short and simple as compared, on the one

(2) And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven,[a] Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. (3) Give us day by day our daily bread.[1] (4) And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. (5) And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; (6) for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me,[2] and I have nothing to set before him? (7) And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. (8) I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. (9) And I say unto you,[b] Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. (10) For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. (11) If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father,[c] will he give him a stone? or if *he ask* a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? (12) Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

[a] Matt. 6. 9.

[1] Or, *for the day.*

[b] Matt. 7. 7.

[2] Or, *out of his way.*

[c] Matt. 7. 9.

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hand, with the devotions which John had prescribed to his disciples, as he prescribed also fasting and almsgiving (Matt. ix. 14; Luke iii. 11), and with the fuller utterances, as of rapt communion with God, of his Master. The prayers of John's disciples were probably, like those of the Pharisees, offered three times a day, at the third, the sixth, and the ninth hours, and after the pattern of the well-known "Eighteen Prayers," which made up the Jewish manual of private devotion.

(2) **When ye pray, say, . . .**—The reproduction, with only a verbal variation here and there, which may well have been the work of the reporter, of what had been given in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. vi. 9—11), is every way significant. That which had been given to the multitude was enough for them. If they wanted to be taught to pray at all, if earnest desires did not spontaneously clothe themselves in words, then this simplest and shortest of all prayers expressed all that they should seek to ask. To utter each of those petitions from the heart, entering into its depth and fulness, was better than to indulge in any amplitude of rhetoric.

(2—4) **Our Father which art in heaven.**—See Notes on Matt. vi. 9—11. The following variations may be noticed. (1) The better MSS. omit "our" and "which art in heaven," and begin with the simple "Father." It was, of course, natural enough that it should be, in course of time, adapted by transcribers to the form which was in common use. (2) Many of the best MSS., again, omit the whole clause, "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth," which may have been inserted with the same purpose. (3) St. Luke substitutes "day by day" for "this day," and so implies that the word ἐπιούσιος (*epiousios*), translated "daily," must have some other meaning. (See *Excursus II. on Notes to St. Matthew.*) (4) St. Luke uses the word "sins" instead of "debts," as being, perhaps, more adapted to the minds of his Gentile readers, while he retains the primary idea of St. Matthew's term in the words, "every one that is indebted to us." The familiar "Forgive us our trespasses," of the Prayer Book, it may be noted, is not found in the Authorised version at all, and comes to us from Tyndale's. (5) Many of the better MSS. omit the clause, "But deliver us from evil," this too, probably, being an addition made for the sake of conformity. (6) St. Luke (all the MSS. here agreeing) omits the final doxology found in some, but not in the best, MSS. of St. Matthew.

(5) **Which of you shall have a friend . . .?**—The illustration, we can hardly call it a parable, is peculiar to St. Luke, and, as setting forth the power of prayer, is specially characteristic of him. (See *Introduction.*) The familiar tone, as of one appealing to each man's natural good-will, and the dramatic vividness of the dialogue, make it almost unique in our Lord's teaching. "Midnight" is chosen as being the time at which, above all others, men expect to be left to their repose. The unexpected visitor asks for "three loaves," one for himself, one for the guest, one as a reserve; and he so far trusts his friend as to hope that he will recognise the claims of his friendship for another. So, the implied lesson is, should the man who prays think that God will care for those for whom he pleads, and will give them also their "daily bread" in both the higher and the lower senses of the word.

(7) **Trouble me not.**—As afterwards in the parable of the Unjust Judge, so here, the illustrative matter cannot be pressed into an interpretation. It seems, indeed, to have been purposely so stated that it could only suggest an *à fortiori* argument. Thus man might answer, but so does not God. If prayer prevails over apathy and impatience, how much more will it prevail when we pray to One who knows our necessities before we ask Him? The picture drawn is obviously from a poor man's house, children and parents sleeping in the same room, the younger children (the Greek word is a diminutive) in the same bed. The word here, however, differs from the other two commonly translated "bed" (*e.g.*, Matt. ix. 2, 6; Mark ii. 4, 9), and probably means the *divan* or raised platform, which often filled nearly half a room in a Jewish or Eastern house.

(8) **Because of his importunity.**—Literally, *because of his shamelessness.* The word is not used elsewhere in the New Testament, and exactly expresses the pertinacity that knows no restraint.

(9—13) **Ask, and it shall be given you.**—See Notes on Matt. vii. 7—11; but note (1) the greater impressiveness of the opening words, "And I say unto you, . . . " as connected with the previous illustration; and (2) the addition of the "scorpion" to the "serpent," as though the recent combination of the two words in chap. x. 19 had so associated them that the one was naturally followed by the other.

(13) If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

(14) And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered. (15) But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils.[a] (16) And others, tempting *him*, sought of him a sign from heaven. (17) But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house *divided* against a house falleth. (18) If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub. (19) And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? therefore shall they be your judges. (20) But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. (21) When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: (22) but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. (23) He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. (24) When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man,[b] he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. (25) And when he cometh, he findeth *it* swept and garnished. (26) Then goeth he, and taketh *to him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first.

(27) And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed *is* the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. (28) But he said, Yea rather, blessed *are* they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

[a] Matt. 12. 24.

[b] Matt. 12. 43.

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(13) **How much more shall your heavenly Father . . .?**—We note a change here also, the one highest gift of the "Holy Spirit" taking the place of the wider and less definite "good things" in Matt. vii. 11. The variation is significant, as belonging to a later stage of our Lord's teaching, and especially as spoken probably to some of the Seventy, who were thus taught to ask boldly for the Spirit which was to make them in very deed a company of prophets. (See Note on chap. x. 1.)

(14, 15) **He was casting out a devil.**—See Notes on Matt. ix. 32—34.

(17—23) **But he, knowing their thoughts.**—St. Luke seems here to bring together into one narrative two incidents which in St. Matt. (ix. 32; xii. 22) appear as separated. The points of resemblance, the dumbness in both cases, both followed by the whisper that Jesus cast out devils by Beelzebub, may have easily led one who collected the facts some years after they occurred to regard the two as identical. On the general tenor of the passage, see Notes on Matt. xii. 24—30.

(20) **If I with the finger of God . . .**—Note the substitution of this language for "by the Spirit of God," in Matt. xii. 28, and its connection with the use by the older prophets of "the hand of the Lord," to indicate the state which issued in prophetic inspiration (Ezek. i. 3; xxxvii. 1), and with "the finger of God" as writing the Commandments on the tables of stone (Ex. xxxi. 18), and Pharaoh's confession that "the finger of God" was with Moses and Aaron in the wonders which they wrought (Ex. viii. 19). The meaning of this boldly anthropomorphic language is sufficiently obvious. As the "hand" denotes power generally, so the "finger" symbolises power in its concentrated and specially-directed energy.

(21—23) **When a strong man armed keepeth his palace.**—See Notes on Matt. xii. 29, 30. The only noticeable variations are the use of "palace" for "house;" of the strong man being "armed;" of the "armour" or "panoply" (the same word as in Eph. vi. 13) in which he trusted; of the "division of the spoils." It is throughout a fuller and more vivid report, but apparently of the same sayings.

(24—26) **When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man.**—See Notes on Matt. xii. 43—45. Here the only variations are (1) the omission of the house being "empty," and (2) of the application of the parable to "this wicked generation."

(27) **A certain woman of the company.**—The incident is peculiar to St. Luke, and, like many other of the facts recorded by him, seems to have been derived from the company of devout women (chap. viii. 1; see *Introduction*) with whom he came into contact. It is interesting as being the first direct fulfilment of the words of the Magnificat, "All generations shall call me blessed" (chap. i. 48), and as showing how the Son of Mary in this instance, as in Matt. xii. 46—50, extended the beatitude. There is at once a singular agreement in the manner in which each incident, embodying substantially the same lesson, follows on the parable of the Unclean Spirit, and a singular difference in the forms which the incident takes in the two narratives. A possible solution of the problem thus presented may be found in supposing the exclamation which St. Luke records to have been uttered by one of the women who was present when, as St. Matthew relates (xii. 47), one said unto Him, "Behold Thy mother and Thy brethren stand without . . ."

(28) **Blessed are they that hear the word of God.**—The term thus used clearly designates here the message of the Kingdom spoken by our Lord Himself, as in the parable of the Sower (Matt. xiii. 20). In its wider application, it of course includes, though it must

(29) And when the people were gathered thick together,[a] he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. (30) For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation. (31) The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here. (32) The men of Nineve shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here. (33) No man,[b] when he hath lighted a candle, putteth *it* in a secret place, neither under a bushel,[1] but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light. (34) The light of the body is the eye:[c] therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when *thine eye* is evil, thy body also *is* full of darkness. (35) Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness. (36) If thy whole body therefore *be* full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.

(37) And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat. (38) And when the Pharisee saw *it*, he marvelled that he had not first washed

[a] Matt. 12. 38.
[1] See Matt. 5. 15.
[c] Matt. 6. 22.
[b] Matt. 5. 15.

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not be confined to it, the record of that spoken Word, or of subsequent revelations of the Truth in what we know as Scripture.

(29—32) **This is an evil generation: they seek a sign.**—See Notes on Matt. xii. 38—42. The words here spoken are clearly an answer to the demand for a sign in verse 16. In St. Matthew the demand and the answer appear in close sequence.

The variations in St. Luke are (1) the omission of the explanation of the manner in which the sign of the prophet Jonah was to be fulfilled by the three days and three nights in the heart of the earth; (2) the position of the reference to the queen of the south, as coming between the sign of Jonah and the rising of the men of Nineveh. In other respects the agreement is more than usually complete.

(33, 34) **No man, when he hath lighted a candle, . . .**—See Note on Matt. v. 15. Here also it seems, on the whole, more probable that we have a portion of our Lord's previous teaching repeated by Him in almost identical terms, than that a fragment of that teaching has either been torn from its proper context by St. Luke, or artificially woven into a discourse to which it did not belong by St. Matthew. Better, as in St. Matthew, *lighted a lamp . . . under the bushel . . . on the lampstand.*

(34) **The light of the body is the eye.**—See Note on Matt. vi. 22. In some respects the sequence of thought in St. Luke differs from that in St. Matthew, and seems somewhat closer. In the Sermon on the Mount, the company of Christ's disciples are the light, and each of them is as the lamp on its proper stand, and the teaching as to the "light of the body," and the corresponding "eye" of the soul, is separated from that illustration by our Lord's comment on the corrupt traditional interpretations of the scribes. Here the two thoughts are brought into close proximity. The moral sense, the "vision and the faculty divine" that has its intuitions of eternal truths, this is the light which is so set that those who "are entering in" (this feature, as in chap. viii. 16, is peculiar to St. Luke)—the seekers and inquirers who are drawn to look in, as it were, upon the house of Christ's Church, the "unlearned" or "unbelievers" of 1 Cor. xiv. 23—may see the light and turn to it.

(35) **Take heed therefore that the light . . .**—Better, *See to it whether the light that is in thee be darkness.* This takes the place in St. Luke's report of St. Matthew's (vi. 23) "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" The warning is one which calls men to self-scrutiny. They need to examine their primary beliefs, their very intuitions of right and wrong, lest all they do should be vitiated at its very source. The call to do this implies that they must have a Light by which to judge their light, a Standard by which to test their standard, and that Light and Standard are found in the teaching of the Light that lighteth every man, in the recorded words and acts of the Son of Man.

(36) **If thy whole body therefore be full of light.**—The statement reads at first like an identical proposition. "If thy whole body be full of light, it shall be full of light all over." The apparent truism is, however, the most expressive utterance of a truth. If the "whole body"—life in all its various manifestations—is illumined by the divine light; if the character is in its measure perfect, as that of the Father is perfect, who is Light, and in whom is no darkness at all (1 John i. 5); if passion, prejudice, ignorance are no longer there—then that character is . . ." We expect to hear something else as a climax of praise, but there is no higher word possible; the whole character is "full of light," illumined, flooded by the eternal Light.

(37) **A certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him.**—On the act, and the feeling which it implied, see Note on chap. vii. 36. The word translated "dine" implies a morning or noon-tide meal, as distinct from the supper of the evening.

(38) **He marvelled that he had not first washed.**—See Notes on Matt. xv. 2; Mark vii. 3. Here the word "washed" (literally, though of course not in the technical sense, *baptized*) implies actual immersion, or, at least, a process that took in the whole body. Mark vii. 4 shows that this was the Pharisaic standard of ceremonial purity.

before dinner. (39) And the Lord said unto him,[a] Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. (40) *Ye* fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also? (41) But rather give alms of such things as ye have;[1] and, behold, all things are clean unto you. (42) But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. (43) Woe unto you,[b] Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets. (44) Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over *them* are not aware *of them.*

(45) Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also. (46) And he said, Woe unto you also, *ye* lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne,[c] and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers. (47) Woe unto you![d] for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. (48) Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres. (49) Therefore also said the wisdom of

[a] Matt. 23. 25.

[1] Or, *as you are able.*

[c] Matt. 23. 4.

[d] Matt. 23. 29.

[b] Matt. 23. 6.

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(39) **Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup.**—See Note on Matt. xxiii. 25. The verses that follow stand in the relation to the great discourse against the Pharisees in that chapter, as the Sermon on the Plain (chap. vi.) does to the Sermon on the Mount. Here, too, we recognise another instance, not of a narrative misplaced, but of words actually repeated. All past experiences, all faults previously noted, were gathered at last into one great and terrible invective. We note, as an instance of independence, St. Luke's use of a different Greek word for "platter," viz., that which is elsewhere (Matt. xiv. 8, 11) better translated *charger*, the large central dish, as distinguished from the smaller "platter" or side-dish. For the "excess" of St. Matthew, St. Luke has the more generic "wickedness." From one point of view the words are more startling here than in their context in St. Matthew. There they are spoken as in open conflict with a class, here they are addressed to an individual member of the class, and by One whom he had invited as a guest. It must be remembered, however, that there was a touch of supercilious scorn in all these invitations, still more, perhaps, in the looks and whispers in which the wonder in this instance showed itself; and the words point to secret sins which the Searcher of hearts knew, and which it was necessary to reprove.

(40) **Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without . . ?**—The question is peculiar to St. Luke, and implies a latent parabolic application of the previous words. Outward, positive ceremonial law, ordering the cleansing of the outside of the cup and of the platter, the eternal moral law requiring truth in the inward parts,—these had, to say the least, the same Maker, and one was not to be neglected for the other.

(41) **But rather give alms of such things as ye have.**—This, too, is peculiar to St. Luke. In the underlying principle of its teaching it sweeps away the whole fabric of the law of ceremonial purity, as the words of St. Matt. xv. 10—20 had, on different grounds, done before. The distinction between the two phases of the truth is that here greater stress is laid on the active purifying power of the love of which alms, if not given for the sake of man's praise, is the natural expression. That which defiles is selfishness; that which purifies is the unselfishness of love.

(42) **Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint.**—See Note on Matt. xxiii. 23. Here, again, we note minor variations—"rue and all manner of herbs," for St. Matthew's "anise and cummin;" "judgment and the love of God," for "the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith"—sufficient to show independence.

(43) **Ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues.**—See Notes on Matt. xxiii. 6, 7.

(44) **Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!**—The better MSS. give simply, *Woe unto you, Pharisees.* (See Note on Matt. xxiii. 27.)

**Ye are as graves which appear not.**—The comparison, though drawn from the same object, presents a different phase of it. In St. Matthew the contrast is between the whitened surface and the decaying bones within. Here the whitewash is worn out, and there is nothing to distinguish the graves, and men walk over them without knowing what lies below the surface.

(45) **Then answered one of the lawyers.**—See Note on Matt. xxii. 35 for the term "lawyer." We note here the sense at once of distinctness and of class fellowship. Though something more than a scribe, he feels that he stands or falls with them.

(46) **Ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne.**—See Note on Matt. xxiii. 4.

(47) **Ye build the sepulchres of the prophets.**—See Note on Matt. xxiii. 29. St. Luke omits the reference, which we find in St. Matthew, to the "sepulchres of the righteous."

(48) **Truly ye bear witness that ye allow.**—The better MSS. give, *Truly are ye witnesses, and ye allow.* The word "allow" has, as always in the English Bible, the meaning of "approving of," "consenting to," "having pleasure in." The last phrase is the rendering of the same Greek word in Rom. i. 32, and would express the meaning here. The derivation of "allow" from the French *allouer* and the Latin *adlaudare*, shows this to be the true sense. On the rest of the verse, see Note on Matt. xxiii. 31.

(49—51) **Therefore also said the wisdom of God.**—The words that follow are in the main the same as those of Matt. xxiii. 34—36, where see Notes. There are, however, some remarkable variations, each of which suggests some questions of interest. (1) The words here appear at first sight as if they were a quotation from a book recognised as of divine authority, and not

God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they shall slay and persecute: (50) that the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; (51) from the blood of Abel[a] unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation. (52) Woe unto you,[b] lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.[1] (53) And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge *him* vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things: (54) laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

CHAPTER XII.—(1) In the mean time,[c] when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the

[1] Or, *forbad.*

[a] Gen. 4. 8.

A.D. 33.

[c] Matt. 16. 6.

[b] Matt. 23. 13.

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a few critics have supposed that there was such a book, bearing the title of "The Wisdom of God," either when our Lord spoke, or when St. Luke wrote. On the other hand there is no trace of the existence of a book with that name; and if it had been prominent enough to be quoted, as it seems to be quoted here, it could scarcely have failed to have left its impress elsewhere. On the whole, then, it seems best to look on the words as a solemn utterance which our Lord's human soul had received as an oracle from God, and which was therefore proclaimed by Him as coming from His Wisdom. His words that "Wisdom is justified of her children" (Matt. xi. 19), present, it is obvious, another example of the same way of speaking of the divine purpose. (2) For "the prophets, and wise men, and scribes" of St. Matthew, we have here "prophets and apostles." The combination points to a Christian, not a pre-Christian, terminology, and is the first example of the union of the two terms that afterwards became normal. (See Note on chap. x. 1.) It goes some way, it may be remarked, to confirm the view suggested in that Note, that two distinct bodies, known respectively as "Prophets" and "Apostles," had already been appointed, and that as the Twelve answered to the latter, so did the Seventy to the former.

**Some of them shall they slay and persecute.**—Note, as perhaps characteristic of St. Luke, the absence of the specific forms of persecution, "crucifying" and "scourging in the synagogues."

(50) **The blood of all the prophets.**—Here again we note a variation from "all the righteous blood" of Matt. xxiii. 35.

(51) **From the blood of Abel . . . .**—See Note on Matt. xxiii. 35. We note the absence here of the description "Zacharias, son of Barachias," which causes so much perplexity in St. Matthew's report. So far as it goes, the omission favours the view that the additional words were inserted by the reporter of our Lord's discourse there, or by some early transcriber.

(52) **Woe unto you, lawyers!**—The "woe" in this case is uttered against those who were, by their very calling, the professed interpreters of the Law. Its form rests on the fact that each scribe or "doctor of the law," in the full sense of the term, was symbolically admitted to his office by the delivery of a key. His work was to enter with that key into the treasure-chambers of the house of the interpreter, and to bring forth thence "things new and old" (Matt. xiii. 52). The sin of the "lawyers" of that time, the "divines" as we should call them, was that they claimed a monopoly of the power to interpret, and yet did not exercise the power. Wearisome minuteness, a dishonest and demoralising casuistry, fantastic legends, these took the place of a free and reverential study of the meaning of the sacred Books. Those who "were entering in," answer to the souls not far from the kingdom of God, waiting for the consolation of Israel, pressing as with eagerness to the spiritual meaning of Law and Prophet. Such, at one stage of his life, must have been the Evangelist himself. This, it will be noted, is the third occurrence of the word in St. Luke's Gospel. (See Notes on chaps. viii. 16, xi. 33.) It is obvious that the passage, as a whole, throws light on the promise of the "keys" of the kingdom made to Peter. (See Note on Matt. xvi. 19.)

(53) **And as he said these things unto them.**—The better MSS. give, "When He had gone forth from thence . . . ," as though Jesus had left the house after uttering the "woe" of verse 52, and was followed by the crowd of angry and embittered disputants.

**To provoke him to speak.**—The Greek verb has literally the sense of "causing to speak impromptu, without thought," and is happily enough rendered by the English text.

(54) **Laying wait for him.**—The better MSS. give the verse in a somewhat simpler form, *laying wait to catch something out of His mouth.* The words throw light on the subsequent question about paying tribute to Cæsar (Matt. xxii. 15—22; Mark xii. 13—17), and show it to have been the acting out of a pre-concerted policy.

## XII.

(1) **In the mean time.**—More literally, *When the myriads of the multitude were gathered together.* The words must be taken in immediate sequence with the close of the previous chapter. The dispute that had begun in the Pharisee's house, and had been carried on by the lawyers and scribes as they followed Jesus from it, attracted notice. As on the occasion of the "unwashed hands" (Matt. xv. 10), He appeals from the scribes to the people, or rather to His own disciples, scattered among the people. The scene may be compared, in the vividness of its description, with the picture of the crowd at Capernaum (Mark ii. 1, 2).

**Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees.**—This again was obviously an expression that had become almost proverbial in our Lord's lips (Matt. xvi. 6). Here, however, the leaven is more definitely specified as "hypocrisy"—*i.e.*, unreality, the simulation, conscious or unconscious, of a holiness which we do not possess. It does not follow that the Pharisees were deliberate impostors of the Tartuffe type. With them, as with other forms of religionism, it was doubt-leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. (2) For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed;[a] neither hid, that shall not be known. (3) Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops. (4) And I say unto you my friends,[b] Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. (5) But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him. (6) Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings,[1] and not one of them is forgotten before God? (7) But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows. (8) Also I say unto you,[c] Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: (9) but he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God. (10) And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven. (11) And when they bring you unto the synagogues,[d] and *unto* magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: (12) for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

(13) And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. (14) And he said unto him, Man, who

[c] Matt. 10. 32; 2 Tim. 2. 12.

[a] Matt. 10. 26.

[b] Matt. 10. 28.

[d] Matt. 10. 19.

[1] See Matt. 10. 29.

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less true that the worst hypocrisy was that which did not know itself to be hypocritical. (See Note on Matt. vi. 2.)

(2) **For there is nothing covered.**—More accurately, *but there is nothing* . . . The Greek conjunction cannot possibly have the meaning of "for," and the latter word suggests a logical connection which is different from that of the original. What our Lord seems to say is, "Beware ye of . . . hypocrisy . . .; but, whether ye beware or not, know that all that is now secret will one day be manifested." On the verse itself, see Note on Matt. xi. 25. The connection in the two passages is, however, very different. There the underlying thought of a future day of revelation (see 1 Cor. iv. 5) is made a motive to courage in proclaiming truths that had been received in secret; here as a motive to caution, lest we should be trusting in the counterfeits of truth and holiness. The force of the two Greek words would, perhaps, be better expressed by, *There is nothing veiled that shall not be unveiled.*

(3) **Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness.**—See Note on Matt. x. 27. There is, it will be noted, a difference of the same character as in the last verse. As recorded in St. Matthew, it is "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light." The disciples were warned of their responsibility and duty as hearers, bound to teach publicly what had been heard in secret. Here they are told of their responsibility as teachers. Every word, however secret, spoken in darkness, in the closet or cabinet, which was the symbol of secresy (see Note on Matt. vi. 6); every whisper of false security or groundless fear, spoken in the ear of sinner or of penitent, would one day be made manifest, as in the presence of men and angels.

(4—9) **I say unto you my friends.**—See Notes on Matt. x. 28—32. The opening words, however, in their tender sympathy, anticipating the language of John xv. 14, 15, may be noted as peculiar to St. Luke.

(6) **Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings?**—The variation from St. Matthew's "two sparrows sold for a farthing," seems to reproduce the very bargains of the market-place. The sparrow was of so little value that the odd bird was thrown in to tempt the purchasers. Both this difference, and that between "not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father," in St. Matthew, and "not one of them is forgotten before God," in St. Luke, are proofs, again, of the independence of the two Gospels.

(8) **Also I say unto you.**—Again we note another like variation between St. Matthew's "before My Father which is in Heaven," and St. Luke's "before the angels of God."

(10) **And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man.**—See Note on Matt. xii. 32. Here the words which had first been uttered in connection with the special charge of "casting out devils by Beelzebub," seem to be repeated in their more general bearing.

(11) **And when they bring you unto the synagogues.**—See Note on Matt. x. 18, 19. What had been a special promise to the Twelve is now extended to all whom the Lord calls His friends. Note, as characteristic of St. Luke's phraseology, the combination "magistrates" (better, *principalities*, or *authorities*) and "powers," the same combination of the two words meeting us again in chap. xx. 20, and 1 Cor. xv. 24; Eph. iii. 10; Col. i. 16, ii. 15; Titus iii. 1. It would seem to be one of the many phrases which had passed from the Evangelist to the Apostle, or conversely.

(13) **And one of the company.**—Better, *one of the multitude.* The request implied a recognition of our Lord's character as a scribe or Rabbi, but it was for the purpose of asking Him to assume that office in its purely secular aspect. As interpreters of the Law, the scribes were appealed to as advocates and arbitrators in questions of property or marriage. The precise nature of the case is not stated here, but the words of the petitioner suggest that he was a younger son, who, on his father's death, claimed from his elder brother more than the share which, according to the usual practice of a double portion for the first-born (2 Kings ii. 9), of right belonged to him, and expected apparently a full moiety.

(14) **Man, who made me a judge . . . ?**—This is the only instance of our Lord's so addressing one

made me a judge or a divider over you? (15) And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. (16) And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: (17) and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? (18) And he said, This will I do; I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. (19) And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry. (20) But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee:[1] then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? (21) So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

(22) And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life,[a] what ye shall eat: neither for the body, what ye shall put on. (23) The life is more than meat, and the body *is more* than raiment. (24) Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? (25) And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? (26) If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why

[1] Or, *do they require thy soul.*

[a] Matt. 6. 25.

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who had come to Him as a questioner. As in Rom. ii. 1, 3, the form, "O man," was one which expressed grave censure and indignation. Was it for this that men came to Him instead of seeking for the kingdom of God? He accordingly distinctly repudiates any but the purely spiritual aspect of a scribe's work, and will neither act publicly as judge nor privately as arbitrator. (Comp. John viii. 11.)

(15) **Take heed, and beware of covetousness.**—The better MSS. give, "of all (*i.e.*, every form of) covetousness." Our Lord's words show that He had read the secret of the man's heart. Greed was there, with all its subtle temptations, leading the man to think that "life" was not worth living unless he had a superfluity of goods. The general truth is illustrated by a parable, obviously selected by St. Luke, as specially enforcing the truth which he held to be of primary importance. (See *Introduction.*)

(17) **And he thought within himself.**—The parable, like that of the Good Samaritan, is more than a similitude, and reads like an actual history. There is an almost dramatic vividness in the rich man's soliloquy. It was the very "superfluity" of the man's goods that became a new cause of anxiety. In such a case half was more than the whole. So far as life depended on property, it would have been better had the property been less.

(18) **I will pull down my barns.**—The Greek noun (*apothekè*, whence our "apothecary,") has a somewhat wider meaning, and includes storehouses or warehouses of all kinds.

**All my fruits.**—Here, too, the Greek word is somewhat wider. Literally, *produce—i.e.*, crops of every kind.

(19) **Eat, drink, and be merry.**—The words remind us of St. Paul's "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die" (1 Cor. xv. 32), and may possibly have suggested them. There is, however, a suggestive difference in the context. Extremes meet, and the life of self-indulgence may spring either from an undue expectation of a lengthened life, or from unduly dwelling on the fact of its shortness, without taking into account the judgment that comes after it. The latter, as in the "carpe diem" of Horace (*Odes*, i. 11, 8), was the current language of popular Epicureanism; the former seems to have been more characteristic of a corrupt Judaism. (Comp. Jas. iv. 13.) In acting on it the Jew with his far outlook, as he dreamt, into the future, was sinking to the level of the dissolute heathen, who was content to live in and for the present only.

(20) **But God said unto him.**—The bold anthropomorphic language seems intended to suggest the thought not only that death came suddenly, but that the man felt that it came from God as the chastisement of his folly.

**Thy soul shall be required.**—Literally, *they require thy soul of thee.* The idiom, as in verse 48, and chap. xiv. 35, is impersonal, and does not require us to supply any definite nominative. We may compare "that when ye fail, they may receive you . . ." (chap. xvi. 9) as a possibly analogous instance; but see Note there.

**Then whose shall those things be?**—The words indicate one of the disturbing thoughts that vex the souls of the wealthy, "He heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them" (Ps. xxxix. 6).

(21) **So is he that layeth up treasure for himself.**—See Note on Matt. vi. 19. To be "rich towards God" finds its explanation in the language, probably suggested by it, which bids us to be "rich in good works" (1 Tim. vi. 18).

(22) **And he said unto his disciples.**—The previous words had been spoken generally to all who needed their warning against greed. What follows is addressed to those who had already been called to the consciousness of a higher life.

**Take no thought for your life.**—Another reproduction, in a distinct context, and as drawn forth by a special occasion, of the general teaching of Matt. vi. 25.

(24, 25) **Consider the ravens.**—See Notes on Matt. vi. 26, 27. Here, however, we have the more specific "ravens" instead of the wider "fowls of the air," as another example of independence. The choice of the special illustration was possibly determined by the language of the Psalmist, "He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry" (Ps. cxlvii. 9).

(26) **If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least.**—The words are peculiar to St. Luke's report. If no amount of anxious care can add one cubit to our stature or the measure of our days (see Notes on Matt. vi. 27), how much less can we control all the myriad contingencies upon which the happiness of the future may depend!

take ye thought for the rest? (27) Consider the lilies how they grow; they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. (28) If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will he clothe* you, O ye of little faith? (29) And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.[1] (30) For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

(31) But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. (32) Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. (33) Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old,[a] a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. (34) For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (35) Let your loins be girded about,[b] and *your* lights burning; (36) and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. (37) Blessed *are* those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. (38) And if he shall

[a] Matt. 6. 20.

[b] 1 Pet. 1. 13.

[1] Or, *live not in careful suspense.*

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(27—31) **Consider the lilies how they grow.**—See Notes on Matt. vi. 28—33. There are, however, some noticeable variations, as (1) in verse 27, in the better MSS., *they spin not, they weave not;* (2) the use in verse 29 of a new verb, "Neither be ye of doubtful mind." The word is not found elsewhere in the New Testament, and is so far characteristic of St. Luke's special culture. But its etymology and its classical use make it equivalent to "Be not tossed to and fro like a ship out on the open sea;" and so taken, it presents a parallel to St. James's description of the "man that wavereth," as "like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed" (Jas. i. 6).

(32) **Fear not, little flock.**—The words continue to be spoken to the inner circle of the disciples. They are "*the* little flock" (the Greek has the article) to whom the Father was pleased to give the kingdom which is "righteousness and peace and joy." There is an implied recognition of the fact, that the "flock" had passed beyond the stage of seeking for the kingdom. In its essence it was theirs already.

**It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.**—Literally, *Your Father was well-pleased to give.* As resting upon an object, the Greek verb appears in chap. iii. 22; Matt. iii. 17; xii. 18; xvii. 5; Mark i. 11. As followed by a verb of action, it is used, in the New Testament, only by St. Luke and St. Paul, and so forms another link in the chain of coincidences connecting them. (Comp. Rom. xv. 26; Gal. i. 15; Col. i. 19, and elsewhere.)

(33) **Sell that ye have.**—In its generalised form the precept is peculiar to St. Luke, but it has its parallel in the command given to the young ruler. (See Note on Matt. xix. 21.) It was clearly one of the precepts which his own characteristic tendencies led him to record (see *Introduction*), and which found its fulfilment in the overflowing love that showed itself in the first days of the Church of the Apostles (Acts ii. 45). Subsequent experience may have modified the duty of literal obedience, but the principle implied in it, that it is wise to sit loose to earthly possessions, possessing them as though we possessed not (1 Cor. vii. 30), is one which has not lost its force.

**Provide yourselves bags . . .**—The Greek word for *bags* (elsewhere "purse," chap. xxii. 35), may be noticed as peculiar to St. Luke. Of the three words used in the New Testament for "purse" or "bag" it was the most classical.

**Where no thief approacheth.**—See Note on Matt. vi. 20. The form is in some respects briefer here, but "the treasure that faileth not" is a touch peculiar to St. Luke. The adjective which he uses is a rare one, and not found elsewhere in the New Testament; but one from the same root, in Wisd. of Sol. vii. 14, viii. 18, describes wisdom as "a treasure that never faileth."

(34) **For where your treasure is.**—See Note on Matt. vi. 21.

(35) **Let your loins be girded . . .**—To "gird up the loins" was, in Eastern habits and with Eastern garments, the received symbol of readiness for active service (verse 37; chap. xvii. 8; 1 Kings xviii. 46; 2 Kings i. 8; John xiii. 4; 1 Pet. i. 13). The "lights" are the lamps (as in Matt. v. 15) which the watchful hold in their hands. What follows has the interest of presenting the germ of the thought which was afterwards developed into the parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins. (See Notes on Matt. xxv. 1—13.)

(37) **He shall gird himself.**—The words give a new significance to the act of our Lord in John xiii. 4. Their real fulfilment is to be found, it need hardly be said, in the far-off completion of the Kingdom, or in the ever-recurring experiences which are the foretastes of that Kingdom; but the office which He then assumed must have reminded the disciples of the words which are recorded here, and may well have been intended to be at once a symbol and an earnest of what should be hereafter. In the promise of Rev. iii. 20 ("I will sup with him and he with Me") we have a recurrence to the same imagery. The passage should be borne in mind as balancing the seeming harshness of the Master in chap. xvii. 8.

**To sit down.**—Literally, *to lie down,* or *recline.*

**Will come forth . . .**—Better, *and as He passes on will minister unto them.* The Greek verb expresses, not the "coming out" as from another chamber, but the passing from one to another, as when He washed the disciples' feet, in John xiii. 5.

(38) **And if he shall come in the second watch.**—In Mark xiii. 35 we have the Roman fourfold division of the night. (See Note there.) Here we find the older Jewish division into three watches. (Judg. vii. 19, 1 Sam. xi. 11.)

come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find *them* so, blessed are those servants. (39) And this know,[a] that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. (40) Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

(41) Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all? (42) And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* lord shall make ruler over his household, to give *them their* portion of meat in due season? (43) Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. (44) Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath. (45) But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; (46) the lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder,[1] and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. (47) And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*. (48) But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

(49) I am come to send fire on the

[a] Matt. 24. 43.

[1] Or, *cut him off.*

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(39, 40) **And this know, that if the goodman of the house . . .**—Better, "if the *master* of the house." See Notes on Matt. xxiv. 43, 44, where the words are almost identical.

(41) **Then Peter said unto him.**—The motive of Peter's question is not given. Interpreted by the like question in Matt. xix. 27 (where see Note), it is natural to suppose that he dwelt, not so much on the last words of warning, as on the greatness of the promise which is held out in verse 37. Was that to be the common blessing of all believers, or the special reward of those who had forsaken all?

(42—46) **Who then is that faithful and wise steward?**—See Notes on Matt. xxiv. 45—51. Here the words come as an answer to Peter's question. The promise was spoken, not for the Twelve only, but for every faithful and wise steward. The words are as the germ of the parable which sets forth the wisdom, though not the faithfulness, of the Unjust Steward (chap. xvi. 8—10). If wisdom and prudence alone deserved the praise there bestowed on it, what would be due to wisdom and faithfulness united? In St. Paul's words, "It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor iv. 2), we may, perhaps, recognise one of the many traces left on his Epistles by the companionship of St. Luke. (See *Introduction.*)

(45) **To beat the menservants.**—Literally, *the boys*, but in the sense which the word had acquired, like the French *garçon*, as used generally for servants of any age. Note the more specific terms as compared with the "fellow-servants" of St. Matthew.

(46) **With the unbelievers.**—Better, perhaps, in a less technical sense, *the unfaithful*, the word affording sharp contrast with the "faithful and wise steward" of verse 42.

(47) **And that servant, which knew his lord's will.**—The verses that follow (47—50) are peculiar to St. Luke, and every word is full of profoundest interest. First there comes a warning to the disciples who knew their Lord's will, who had been told to watch for His coming, to prepare themselves and others for it. That "will" included the use of all gifts and opportunities, as in the parables of the Pounds and the Talents, with faithfulness and activity in using them. On those who, with their eyes open, were sinning against light and knowledge (our Lord's words had, we can scarcely doubt, a latent reference to Judas) there should come, in this world or in the world to come, a penalty proportionably severe.

(48) **He that knew not.**—The words manifest the tenderness of a considerate equity, like that which uttered itself in our Lord's words as to Sodom and Tyre and Sidon, in chap. x. 12, 13. Man's knowledge is the measure of his responsibilities; and in the absence of knowledge, more or less complete, though stripes may be inflicted as the only effective discipline for teaching men what things are or are not worthy of stripes, yet they shall be "few." The words throw a gleam of hope on the darkness that lies behind the veil. We know not whether the "few stripes" imply limited duration, or suffering less acute, the *tolerabilior damnatio* of Augustine, and need not care to know. We may well be content to leave that question to Him who spake the words, and in so doing gave the most convincing proof that the Judge of all the earth will assuredly do right (Gen. xviii. 25).

**Unto whomsoever much is given.**—The two clauses differ slightly, though they are parallel in meaning; the first referring to "gifts" which involve what we speak of as a general moral responsibility, the second to that which has been solemnly "committed to men as a trust or deposit." (Comp. 1 Tim. vi. 20; 2 Tim. i. 12, 14.)

(49) **I am come to send fire on the earth.**—There is a strange unique abruptness in the utterance. We are compelled to assume a pause, a moment's thought, as in one whose gaze looks out into the future, and who at once feels its terrors and yet accepts them. The fire which He came to send is the fire of judgment which shall burn up the chaff (see Note on Matt. iii. 12), the baptism of fire which shall purify and cleanse as well as destroy. The Son of Man knew that this, with all its terrors, was what He came to work. If the fire was already kindled, if judgment was already passed upon the unfaithful stewards and the servants who knew their Lord's will

earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? (50) But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened[1] till it be accomplished! (51) Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth?[a] I tell you, Nay; but rather division: (52) for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. (53) The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

(54) And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west,[b] straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is. (55) And when *ye see* the south wind blow ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass. (56) *Ye* hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time? (57) Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

(58) When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate,[c] *as thou art* in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison. (59) I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite.[2]

[1] Or, *pained.*

[a] Matt. 10. 34.

[b] Matt. 16. 2.

[c] Matt. 5. 25.

[2] See Mark 12. 42.

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and did it not, why should He wish to check it? What other wish or will was right for Him than that it should complete what it had begun, even though it brought not peace, but a sword—not union, but division?

(50) **I have a baptism to be baptized with.**—Here we have a point of contact with the words spoken to the sons of Zebedee. (See Notes on Matt. xx. 22, and Mark x. 38.) The baptism of which the Lord now speaks is that of one who is come into deep waters, so that the floods pass over him, over whose head have passed and are passing the waves and billows of many and great sorrows. Yet here, too, the Son of Man does not shrink or draw back. What He felt most keenly, in His human nature, was the pain, the constraint of expectation. He was, in that perfect humanity of His, harassed and oppressed, as other sufferers have been, by the thought of what was coming, more than by the actual suffering when it came.

(51—53) **Suppose ye that I am come to give peace?**—See Notes on Matt. x. 34, 35. The chief variations are "division" for "sword," and, in verse 53, the doubled statement of reciprocated enmity in each relationship.

(54—56) **When ye see a cloud rise out of the west.**—See Notes on Matt. xvi. 2. The differences in form are, however, noticeable enough to suggest the impression here also of like teaching at a different time. In St. Matthew the words come as an answer to the demand for a sign, here without any such demand; there the signs are the morning and the evening redness of the sky, here the cloud in the west and the south wind blowing. It is, however, probable enough that the like answer was called forth by a like occasion.

(55) **There will be heat.**—See Note on Matt. xx. 12. The word rendered "heat" is probably used here as signifying the "burning wind," the *simoom,* which, blowing over the desert, scorched and withered all that was green and fresh. (Comp. Jas. i. 11, where it is rightly rendered "burning heat.")

(56) **How is it that ye do not discern this time?**—What had been said before to Pharisees and Sadducees (Matt. xvi. 3) is here repeated with a wider application. It was true of the people, as of their teachers, that they did not discern the true import of the time, the season, the crisis in which they found themselves. It was "the time of their visitation" (see Note on chap. xix. 44), and yet they knew it not.

(57) **Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?**—Better, *judge that which is just.* The meaning of the words is not that they did not know what was right, but that they did not act upon their knowledge. They were passing an unrighteous judgment on the preachers of repentance, on the Baptist and on the Christ, because they came to tell them of the time of their visitation, when their action ought to have been as true and spontaneous as their daily judgment about the weather. It is possible, though not, I think, probable, that the question "Why even of yourselves . . ." may have some reference to the request of the disciple, in verse 13, that our Lord would act as judge.

(58) **When thou goest with thine adversary . . . .**—Better, with all the MSS., *For as thou goest . . . .* The conjunction would seem to have been omitted by the translators because they did not see the sequence of thought implied in it. There is, indeed, something at first strangely abrupt in this reproduction of what had appeared in the Sermon on the Mount as part of our Lord's teaching as to the true meaning of the command "Thou shalt not kill." (See Note on Matt. v. 25.) There the words are spoken at once of earthly adversaries and magistrates and of the great Judge of all. Is it so in this place also? Is this the "just judgment" to which verse 57 referred, in contrast with the prevailing bitterness and hardness of men in the quarrels brought on chiefly by their greed of gain? The answer to the question is found in accepting, as before, both the literal meaning and that of which it becomes a parable, with, perhaps, a greater stress than before on the spiritual aspect of the words. Our Lord is speaking to the people; there has been no immediate reference, as before, to the Sixth Commandment. His teaching has taken a wider range, and the old words, as it were, come back, with every point of the parable brought into full clearness. The "adversary" is the Law that accuses them (John v. 45); the judge is none other than the Judge of all the earth; and then all follows in due order as before.

(59) **I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence . . .**—See Note on Matt. v. 26. St. Luke substitutes the yet smaller coin, the "mite," or *half-quadrans* (see Note on Mark xii. 42), for the "farthing" of St. Matthew

A.D. 33.

CHAPTER XIII.—(1) There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilæans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. (2) And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilæans were sinners above all the Galilæans, because they suffered such things? (3) I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. (4) Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners[1] above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? (5) I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

(6) He spake also this parable; A certain *man* had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. (7) Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it

[1] Or, *debtors.*

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## XIII.

(1) **The Galilæans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.**—The incident is not related by Josephus or any other historian, but it was quite in harmony with Pilate's character. (See Note on Matt. xxvii. 2.) We may fairly infer it to have originated in some outburst of zealous fanaticism, such as still characterised the followers of Judas of Galilee (Acts v. 37), while the pilgrims from that province were offering their sacrifices in the courts of the Temple, and to have been repressed with the same ruthless severity as he had shown in other tumults. It was probably one, at least, of the causes of the enmity between Herod and Pilate of which we read in chap. xxiii. 12.

(2) **Suppose ye that these Galilæans . . ?**—The tale had probably been told with a conviction, expressed or implied, that the massacre had been a special judgment for some special and exceptional guilt. Our Lord at once, here as in John ix. 7, sweeps away all their rash interpretations of the divine government, and declares that all, unless they repented, were under the sentence of a like destruction. The "likewise," however, is hardly to be taken, as some have taken it, in a literal sense. Some, it may be of those who heard the words, perished by the sword of Titus, as the Galileans had done by the sword of Pilate, but hardly all who were impenitent. Still less could this be said of the form of death referred to in the verse that follows.

(4) **Upon whom the tower in Siloam fell.**—Here, again, we have a reference to an incident not recorded elsewhere. It was clearly one that had impressed the minds of men with horror, as a special judgment. At or near to Siloam, the modern *Birket-Silwan,* is a swimming-pool, or tank (John ix. 7), where the valley of Tyropœon opens into that of the Kedron. It was supplied through artificial conduits, and appears to have been one of a series of pools so fed. It is not unlikely, connected as Siloam thus was with the water-system of the city, that the tower in question was part of the works which Pilate had planned, and partly executed, for the construction of an aqueduct, and for which he appropriated part of the Corban or sacred treasure of the Temple, and if so, the popular excitement which this measure caused (see Note on Matt. xxvii. 2) might well lead men to look on its fall as an instance of a divine judgment on what they regarded as an act of sacrilege.

(6) **A certain man had a fig tree.**—The parable stands obviously in very close connection with the foregoing teaching. The people had been warned of the danger of perishing, unless they repented. They are now taught that the forbearance and long-suffering of God are leading them to repentance. The sharp warning of the Baptist, "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down" (Matt. iii. 10), is expanded into a parable. As regards the outward framework of the story, we have only to note that the joint culture of the fig-tree and the vine was so common as to have passed into a proverb (2 Kings xviii. 31; Song of Sol. ii. 13). The interpretation of the parable as to its general drift is easy enough. The barren fig-tree is the symbol of a fruitless profession of godliness; the delay represents the forbearance of God in allowing yet a time for repentance. When we come to details, however, serious difficulties present themselves. If we take the fig-tree as representing Israel, what are we to make of the vineyard? If the owner of the vineyard be Christ, who is the vine-dresser? Do the three years refer to the actual duration of our Lord's ministry? Answers to these questions will be found in the following considerations:—(1) The vineyard is uniformly in the parabolic language of Scripture the symbol of Israel. (See Note on Matt. xxi. 33.) (2) The owner of that vineyard is none other than the great King, the Lord of Hosts (Isa. v. 7). (3) If this be so, then the fig-tree must stand for something else than Israel as a nation, and the context points to its being the symbol of the individual soul, which inheriting its place in a divine order, is as a tree planted in the garden of the Lord. (Comp. Ps. i. 3; Jer. xviii. 8.) (4) The "three years" in which the owner comes seeking fruit can, on this view, answer neither to the three stages of Revelation—Patriarchal, Mosaic, and Prophetic—nor the three years of our Lord's ministry, but represent, as the symbol of completeness, the full opportunities given to men, the calls to repentance and conversion which come to them in the several stages of their lives in youth, manhood, age. (5) The dresser of the vineyard, following the same line of thought, is the Lord Jesus Himself, who intercedes, as for the nation as a whole, so for each individual member of the nation. He pleads for delay. He will do what can be done by "digging" into the fallow ground of the soul, and by imparting new sources of nourishment or fruitfulness. If these avail, well. If not, the fig-tree, by implication every fig-tree in the vineyard that continued barren, would be cut down.

(7) **Why cumbereth it the ground?**—The Greek verb means more than that the fig-tree was what we call a useless burden or incumbrance, and implies positive injury. It is commonly rendered by "bring to nought," or some like phrase. (In 1 Cor. xiii. 8 it is rendered "fail.") This would seem, indeed, to have been the old meaning of the English verb. Comp. Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar,* iii. 1:—

> "Domestic fury, and fierce civil strife,
> Shall *cumber* all the parts of Italy."

the ground? (8) And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung *it:* (9) and if it bear fruit, *well:* and if not, *then* after that thou shalt cut it down.

(10) And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. (11) And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up *herself.* (12) And when Jesus saw her, he called *her to him,* and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. (13) And he laid *his* hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. (14) And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day. (15) The Lord then answered him, and said, *Thou* hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or *his* ass from the stall, and lead *him* away to watering? (16) And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day? (17) And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

(18) Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like?[a] and whereunto shall I resemble it? (19) It is like a

[a] Matt. 13. 31.

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(8) **And dung it.**—Literally, *and put dung.* Homely—as the imagery is, it suggests fertilising and gracious influences not less vividly than the dew or rain from heaven, and points, perhaps, specifically to such as are working on us in our earthly surroundings, as contrasted with the directly supernatural action of God's grace.

(9) **And if it bear fruit.**—Some of the better MSS. have, *if it bear fruit in the time to come . . .* With either reading the sentence is elliptical, and the insertion of "well," as in the English, is needed to convey its meaning.

(10) **And he was teaching in one of the synagogues.**—The narrative that follows is peculiar to St. Luke. The indefiniteness as to time and place indicate that it was probably one of the previously unrecorded traditions which he met with when he entered on his personal search for materials. This is in part confirmed by the use of "the Lord" in verse 15. (See Note on chap. vii. 13.)

(11) **Behold, there was a woman . . . .**—The description indicates the accuracy of the trained observer. The duration of the affliction (as in Acts ix. 33), the symptoms of permanent curvature of the spine, the very form of the two participles, *bent together . . . . unable to unbend,* are all characteristic. The phrase a "spirit of infirmity," *i.e.*, an evil spirit producing bodily infirmity, implies a diagnosis that the seat of the powerlessness, as in some forms of catalepsy and aphasia, was in the region in which soul and body act and react on each other. The presence of such a sufferer in the synagogue may, perhaps, be held to imply habitual devotion, and therefore the faith that made her receptive of the healing power.

(12) **Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.**—Better, *thou hast been loosed . . .* The words were obviously a test of the woman's faith. Would she, on hearing the words, make the effort to do what she had not done for eighteen years? The verb, it may be noted, is in the perfect. The work of healing was already completed.

(13) **And he laid his hands on her.**—The bodily act was, as in the analogous cases of the blind and dumb (see Note on Matt. ix. 29), a help to the faith which was necessary, on the woman's part, that she might receive the full benefit of the divine act of power. When this was done, she poured forth her joy (as the tense of the verb implies) in a continuous strain of praise.

(14) **And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation.**—The traditional law for the work of the Jewish physician was that he might act in his calling in cases of emergency, life and death cases, but not in chronic diseases, such as this. This law the ruler of the synagogue wished to impose as a check upon the work of the Healer here.

(15, 16) **Doth not each one of you . . . ?**—The principle is the same as that in Matt. xii. 11 (where see Note), but the case is put in even a stronger form. There the illustration is drawn from what might seem an exceptional act for an exceptional emergency; here from the regular practice of men, where their own interests were concerned. If they pleaded that it was not for their own interests, but those of humanity to the brutes committed to their charge, the answer was obvious that the daughter of Abraham was "better" than the ox or ass.

(16) **Whom Satan hath bound.**—The words imply the belief that there was another source than mere bodily disease for the infirmity—in part, at least, the belief that all disease—or very many forms of it—is directly or indirectly traceable to the power of the Enemy. So St. Paul's "thorn in the flesh"—assuming it to be some sharp bodily suffering—is "the messenger of Satan." (See Note on 2 Cor. xii. 7.)

It is obvious that this narrative would have for one like St. Luke a special interest over and above that which like narratives had for the other Evangelists. We can scarcely fail to think of the "beloved physician" as practising his art for the good of men, his brothers, on the Sabbath, as on other days. In doing so he would doubtless be met, on the part of Jews and Judaisers, with words like those of the ruler of the synagogue, "There are six days on which men ought to work; do thy work of healing on them." For such a one it would be a comfort unspeakable to be able to point to our Lord's words and acts as sanctioning his own practice.

(18–21) **Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like?**—See Notes on Matt. xiii. 31—33. The first impression with most readers, grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it. (20) And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? (21) It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures[1] of meal, till the whole was leavened. (22) And he went through the cities and villages,[a] teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. (23) Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

(24) Strive to enter in at the strait gate:[b] for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. (25) When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: (26) then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. (27) But he shall say,[c] I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all *ye* workers of iniquity. (28) There shall be weeping

[b] Matt. 7. 13.

[1] See Matt. 13. 33.

[a] Matt. 9. 35.

[c] Matt. 7. 23.

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in the absence of any apparent trace of sequence, is that we have an isolated fragment of our Lord's teaching, torn from the context in which we find it in St. Matthew. On the other hand, we must remember (1) that our Lord was in the synagogue, and it was on the Sabbath day, and that so both time and place called for teaching of some kind; and (2) that the parables that follow may well be regarded but as samples of the teaching which those who were in the synagogue had treasured up in their memories. They were fit and edifying parables at any time; not least so, assuredly, at this. When proof had been given that the Kingdom of God had indeed come nigh unto men, it was well to set before them something as to its nature, its extent, its mode of working inwardly and outwardly; and the fact that the similitudes which did this had been used before, did not necessarily make them inapplicable or unprofitable when used again.

(22) **And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying.**—Literally, *making a journey*, as implying a circuit deliberately planned. This is apparently the continuation of the same journey as that of which chap. ix. 51 recorded the beginning. There seems reason to believe, as stated in the Note on that passage, that it lay chiefly through the cities and villages of Peræa, the modern *Hauran*, on the east side of the Jordan. Such a journey, though with comparatively little record of what happened on it, is implied in Matt. xix. 1, Mark x. 1, in the retirement "beyond Jordan" of John x. 40. It had led our Lord at first through Samaria (chap. ix. 52), then back to Samaria and Galilee again (chap. xvii. 11), then either from the east, crossing the river, or from the west to Jericho (chap. xviii. 35).

(23) **Are there few that be saved?**—More accurately, *that are being saved*, or, *that are in the way of salvation*. The Greek participle is present, not perfect, and this sense should be borne in mind both here and in 2 Cor. ii. 15—still more so, perhaps, in Acts. ii. 47, where the English version gives, with a singular infelicity, "such as should be saved."

We are left to conjecture to what class the questioner belonged, and what feelings prompted the question. Was he thinking of salvation in the higher Christian sense of the term, or of safety from that destruction of which Christ had spoken as coming on the impenitent people? In the mind of the questioner the two things may have been blended together, but the answer clearly points to the former, and we have sufficient evidence that such questions were agitating men's minds in the apocryphal Revelation known as the Second Book of Esdras. This book is probably (in part, at least, certainly, see 2 Esdr. viii. 28, 29), post-Christian, and has been assigned to the time of Nero, or Domitian, or Trajan; but it reflects with a wonderful fulness the fevered, anxious thoughts that were working among both Jews and Gentiles, and among those none is so prominent as that "many are created, but few shall be saved" (2 Esdr. viii. 1, 3, 55). Among the strange cabbalistic fancies of the Rabbis, one was an attempt to fix the number of the saved by the numerical value of the letters of this or that text that prophesied of the Kingdom of Heaven. Assuming the question to be of this nature, its form indicates that it was a speculative inquiry. A man anxious and in earnest would have asked, "What must I do to be saved?" And, being a speculative question, our Lord put it aside, gave no direct answer, and sought to force the man back on the thought of what was needed that he himself might take his place in that company.

(24) **Strive to enter in at the strait gate.**—See Notes on Matt. vii. 13, 14. Another instance of general teaching adapted to a special occasion. We note, however, the variation, "strive to enter in"—*i.e.*, struggle as the wrestler struggles (the word being the same as that in 1 Cor. ix. 25; 1 Tim. vi. 12), instead of the simple "enter ye in," and the compression of the whole illustration.

(25) **When once the master of the house . . .**—The passage contains elements that are common at once to Matt. vii. 22, 23, and xxv. 10—12, where see Notes.

(26) **We have eaten and drunk . . .**—Better, *we ate and drank . . .* , and *Thou didst teach*. The words differ slightly from those in Matt. vii. 22, which put higher claims into the mouths of the speakers, "Did we not prophecy in Thy name . . . ?" They are, *i.e.*, the representatives of those who hold office in the Church of God, yet have not truly submitted themselves to the guidance of the Divine Teacher. Here the words clearly point to actual companionship, to the hopes that men were building on the fact that they had once sat at meat, in the house of Publican or Pharisee, with the Prophet whom they acknowledged as the Christ. In its wider application it, of course, includes all who in any sense eat and drink with Him now in visible fellowship with His Church, and who rest their hopes of eternal life on that outward communion.

(28, 29) **There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**—See Notes on Matt. viii. 11, 12; but notice, as an interesting variation, the addition of the "prophets" to the names of the three patriarchs.

and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you *yourselves* thrust out. (29) And they shall come from the east, and *from* the west, and from the north, and *from* the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. (30) And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.[a]

(31) The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee. (32) And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third *day* I shall be perfected. (33) Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the *day* following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. (34) O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,[b] which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen *doth gather* her brood under *her* wings, and ye would not! (35) Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until *the time* come when ye shall say, Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

[b] Matt. 23. 37.

[a] Matt. 19. 30.

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(30) **And, behold, there are last . . .**—See Note on Matt. xix. 30. In point of time, it may be noticed, this is the first utterance of the great law that God's judgment reverses man's. When it was uttered in reference to the young ruler, it was but a fresh application of the wider law. Here the application is primarily national. Israel had been the first of nations, but it should become, in its outward fortunes, the last, and the heathen who had been "without hope and without God in the world" (Eph. ii. 12) should gain the high pre-eminence of being the heirs of the kingdom. The individual application of the words grows naturally, however, out of the national.

(31) **Herod will kill thee.**—This is the only intimation of such a purpose, and it is, of course, a question whether the Pharisees reported what they actually knew, out of feelings more or less friendly to our Lord, or invented a false tale in order that *they* might get rid of His presence among them, or were sent by Herod to announce his purpose as a threat that *he* might be rid of it. Our Lord's answer, "Go tell that fox . . .," points to the last of these views as the most probable. It is true that in chap. xxiii. 8, we are told that Herod "had desired to see Him of a long season;" but oscillations of vague curiosity and vague fears were quite in keeping with the Tetrarch's character. Accepting the conclusion suggested in the Note on verse 22, that we have here a record of our Lord's Peræan ministry, we may probably connect the message with the fact that His journeys had brought Him near Machærus, where John had been imprisoned, and in which was one of Herod's most stately palaces (Jos. *Wars*, vii. 6). Thence the Pharisees may have come with a threat, in which we may possibly trace the hand of Herodias, and which, at least, reminds us of the message sent by Jezebel to Elijah (1 Kings xix. 2). St. Luke's knowledge of the incident may have been derived from Manaen; or, as Machærus was famous for hot medicinal springs, and for herbs that had a wide-spread fame for special virtues (Josephus, as above), it may have been one of the places to which he was attracted by his pursuits as a physician. (See *Introduction.*)

(32) **Go ye, and tell that fox . . .**—The word was eminently descriptive of the character both of the Tetrarch individually, and of the whole Herodian house. The fact that the Greek word for "fox" is always used as a feminine, gives, perhaps, a special touch of indignant force to the original. He had so identified himself with Herodias that he had lost his manliness, and the proverbial type of the worst form of woman's craft was typical of him.

**Behold, I cast out devils.**—What was the meaning of the message? What we read in chap. xxiii. 8, perhaps, supplies the answer to that question. Herod "hoped to have seen some miracle done by Him," and Jesus, reading his thoughts, tells him that the time for such sights and wonders was all but over. One day, and yet another, and yet a third—so our Lord describes, in proverbial speech (comp. the analogous forms of Ex. v. 14; Hos. vi. 2), an interval of very short duration, and then "I am perfected." The word is strictly a present tense used predictively, and may be either middle or passive in its meaning, the latter being most in harmony with the use of the verb elsewhere. "Then I am brought to the end; then I reach the goal of this human life of Mine." Very noteworthy in connection with this passage is the prominence given to the verb throughout the Epistle to the Hebrews, as, *e.g.*, in Heb. ii. 10, v. 9.

(33) **Nevertheless I must walk.**—Better, *I must journey*, or, *I must go onward*, the word being that used in chap. ix. 51, 53. The words indicate the intensity of conviction and of purpose as that expressed before. I cannot bring myself to accept the words that follow—"to-day and to-morrow . . ."—as meaning that there were but three days to pass before He should enter Jerusalem. It would not have been true in fact. It would have seemed obvious, had we not too abundant proof of men's want of power to enter into the poetic forms of Eastern speech when they differ from our own, that the literal meaning here is altogether out of place, and that the same formula is used as in the preceding verse, with the same meaning—*i.e.*, as conveying the thought of a short, undefined interval.

**It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.**—The word used here for "it cannot be," occurs in this passage only of the New Testament, and has a peculiar half-ironical force—"It is not meet, it would be at variance with the fitness of things, it is morally impossible." Jerusalem had made the slaughter of the prophets a special prerogative, a monopoly, as has been said, of which none might rob her.

(34, 35) **O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets.**—See Notes on Matt. xxiii. 37—39. Here, as in other like cases, we have to choose between the alternatives of the words having been spoken on two different though similar occasions, or of one of the

CHAPTER XIV.—(1) And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him. (2) And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy. (3) And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? (4) And they held their peace. And he took *him*, and healed him, and let him go; (5) and answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day? (6) And they could not answer him again to these things.

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(7) And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them, (8) When thou art bidden of any *man* to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; (9) and he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man

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Evangelists misplacing the words which were actually spoken but once. As with most other passages thus re-appearing in a different context, I hold the former to be by far the most probable. In each report, it may be noted, they fit into the context with a perfectly natural coherence.

### XIV.

(1) **Into the house of one of the chief Pharisees.**—Better, *of the rulers of the Pharisees.* The meaning of the phrase is probably more definite than that suggested by the English. The man was either a "ruler" in the same sense as Nicodemus (John iii. 1), or the rich young man in Luke xviii. 18—*i.e.*, a member of the Sanhedrin (which seems most likely)—or else occupied a high position in the lay-hierarchy (if the phrase may be allowed) which had developed itself in the organisation of Pharisaism.

**To eat bread on the Sabbath day.**—Sabbath feasts were then, as at a later time, part of the social life of the Jews, and were often—subject, of course, to the condition that the food was cold—occasions of great luxury and display. Augustine speaks of them as including dancing and song, and the "Sabbath luxury" of the Jews became a proverb. On the motives of the Pharisee—probably half respect and half curiosity—see Notes on chap. vii. 36.

(2) **A certain man before him which had the dropsy.**—This is the only miracle of the kind recorded in the Gospels. The term which St. Luke uses is strictly technical (*hydropikos*), and we may fairly see in the narrative another illustration of his professional character. He, more than others, had been led to specific inquiries as to the nature of the diseases which our Lord had healed. (See *Introduction.*) The man may have been an invited guest, or the feast may have been one of the semi-public ones in which the richer Pharisees displayed their hospitality.

(3) **Unto the lawyers.**—See Note on Matt. xxii. 35. The teaching of our Lord is identical in substance, and nearly so in form, with that in chap. vi. 6—11, Matt. xii. 9—14, Mark iii. 1—6. Here, however, it will be noticed, our Lord takes the initiative in the controversy, whereas before the scribes and Pharisees had asked Him the question. Possibly some report of what had then passed had reached the ears of those who were now present, and caused them to be silent both before and after the question.

(4) **And he took him.**—Better, *he laid hold on him.* The healing was, in this instance, effected by actual contact.

(5) **Which of you shall have an ass or an ox . . .**—The line of thought is all but identical with that of chap. xiii. 15. Here, as there, the outward features of Jewish life are the same as they had been in Ex. xx. 17, and Isa. i. 3. The "ox and the ass" are the beasts which common men use and value. The horse belongs to conquerors and kings. This is said with reference to the received text. Many of the best MSS., however, read, "Which of you shall have a *son*, or an ox . . . ?" and, on the whole, this reading seems likely to be the true one. The familiar combination of the ox and the ass would naturally lead a transcriber to substitute ὄνος (ass) for υἱός (son). There would be nothing to tempt any one to a change in the opposite direction.

**Fallen into a pit.**—Literally, *into a well,* as in John iv. 6—11, but the word was applied also, as in Rev. ix. 1, 2, to "wells without water"—*i.e.,* as here, to "pits."

**And will not straightway pull him out.**—The words appeal to the common action and natural impulse of men, but the casuistry of the Pharisees had, as a matter of fact, given a different answer. Food might be let down to the ox or ass, but no effort to pull him out was to be made till the Sabbath rest was over.

(6) **And they could not answer him again.**—The Greek is, perhaps, a little more emphatic—"They *had no power*, they were *powerless* to answer him."

(7) **And he put forth a parable.**—The passage has the interest of being, in conjunction with chap. xi. 43, the germ of the great invective of Matt. xxiii. 6, and the verses that follow. (See Notes there.)

**Chief rooms.**—Better, *chief places,* or *chief couches;* literally, the chief places to recline in after the Eastern fashion. This, again, implies the semi-public character of the feast. The host did not at first place his guests according to his own notions of fitness. They were left to struggle for precedence. What follows is hardly a parable in our modern sense of the term, but is so called as being something more than a mere precept, and as illustrated by a half-dramatic dialogue.

(8) **Sit not down.**—Literally, *recline not.*

**Lest a more honourable man than thou . .**—The words imply that the common practice was for the guests to seat themselves; then, as in the parable of the wedding garment (Matt. xxii. 11), the host came in "to see the guests."

(9) **And thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.**—At first sight the words seem to suggest lower motives than those by which the disciples of Christ should regulate their lives—an artificial and calculating rather than a real humility. Three explanations may be given of what is a very real

place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. (10) But when thou art bidden,[a] go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. (11) For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased;[b] and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

(12) Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor *thy* rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. (13) But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:[c] (14) and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

(15) And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed *is* he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.[d] (16) Then said he unto him,[e] A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: (17) and sent his servant at supper

[a] Prov. 25. 6, 7.

[c] Tobit 4. 7.

[b] Matt. 23. 12.

[d] Rev. 19 9.

[e] Matt. 22. 2.

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difficulty—(1) That all precepts bearing directly upon social ethics start naturally, as in the Book of Proverbs (from which the form of the teaching is, indeed, directly derived, comp. Prov. xxv. 6, 7), from the prudential rather than the spiritual view of life. (2) That there is in this counsel an adaptation of teaching that, left to itself, would have been higher, to the weaknesses of those who listened; a method, that as we have noted elsewhere, can hardly be defined in strictly accurate language, but, in its merely human aspects, might be regarded as involving some tinge of grave and solemn irony. From their own point of view even, they were grasping at the shadow and losing the substance, poor as that substance was. Their restless vanity was suicidal. (3) There is the deep ethical truth that every victory obtained, even under the influence of a lower motive, over a dominant weakness or strong temptation, strengthens the habit of self-control, and that the power thus developed tends in the nature of things to go on to further and yet further victories.

(10) **Sit down in the lowest room.**—Better, as before, *recline* for the verb, and *place*, or *couch*, for the noun.

**Friend.**—The Greek word is not the same as in Matt. xx. 13 (where see Note), xxii. 12, xxvi. 50, but is the same as in John xi. 11, xv. 14. The difference is suggestive. The first word addressed to the humble and lowly guest speaks of confidence and affection. He is welcomed as, in the highest sense, the "friend" of the giver of the feast.

**Worship . . .**—Better, *honour*, or *glory*, the same word as in John v. 44, xii. 43.

(11) **Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased.**—The reproduction of the teaching in words which are almost an echo of these, in 1 Pet. v. 5, is interesting as showing the impression which it had made on the minds of the disciples.

(12) **A dinner or a supper.**—The two words were used respectively for the morning and the evening meal—the former, like the Continental *déjeûner*, being taken commonly a little before noon, the latter, about sunset.

**Thy friends, nor thy brethren.**—The words were clearly chosen as including the classes of guests who were then present. Our Lord saw in that Sabbath feast nothing but an ostentatious hospitality, calculating on a return in kind. It might not be wrong in itself, but it could take no place, as the Pharisee clearly thought it would do, in the list of good works by which he sought to win God's favour. The very fact that it met with its reward on earth excluded it, almost *ipso facto*, from the reward of the resurrection of the just.

(13) **When thou makest a feast.**—Literally, as in chap. v. 29, *a reception*. In practice, it need hardly be said, the form of obedience to the precept must, of necessity, vary with the varying phases of social life, and with the lessons of experience. Relief given privately, thoughtfully, discriminatively, may be better both for the giver, as less ostentatious, and for the receivers, as tending to the formation of a higher character, than the open feast of the Eastern form of benevolence. The essence of the beatitude, as distinct from its form, remains for all who give freely to those who can give them no recompense in return, who have nothing to offer but their thanks and prayers.

(14) **At the resurrection of the just.**—The passage has the interest of being the first occurrence of the word "resurrection" in our Lord's teaching. On this point our Lord, while rebuking the pride and hypocrisy of the Pharisees, accepted the fundamental doctrine of their system, and so furnished a precedent for St. Paul's conduct in Acts xxiii. 6.

(15) **Blessed is he that shall eat bread . . .**—The form of the exclamation was obviously determined by the words which our Lord had just spoken. It may have been a more or less familiar formula among devout Jews who expected the coming of the Christ. It may have embodied some recollections of the great discourse at Capernaum (John vi. 26—59). On the whole it seems more natural to see in it a burst of honest, unwonted enthusiasm, kindled by sympathy with what our Lord had said, than to regard it as spoken hypocritically, with a view to drawing from His lips some heretical utterance that might ensure His condemnation.

(16) **A certain man made a great supper.**—Historically this has the interest of being the first occurrence of the "feast" imagery in our Lord's teaching. Here, as with so many of His parables, it is suggested by the occasion. Afterwards, as in Matt. xxii. 1—13, it is reproduced in an altered and expanded form. Here, as there, the giver of the feast is God.

**And bade many.**—The sequel determines the primary application of the word to the Jewish people. But it need hardly be said that it admits of manifold secondary, or even tertiary, applications through the whole history of the many churches of Christendom.

(17) **And sent his servant.**—The servant stands in this parable as the representative of the whole order of prophets and apostles—of all who, like the Baptist and the Twelve, had been sent to invite men

time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. (18) And they all with one *consent* began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. (19) And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. (20) And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. (21) So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. (22) And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. (23) And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled. (24) For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

to the Kingdom. "The time of supper" is, in the primary application, the time of our Lord's coming, when the Kingdom of Heaven was first proclaimed as nigh at hand. All things—pardon, peace, blessedness—were now ready for those who would accept them.

(18) **They all with one consent . . .**—The Greek phrase, as the italics show, is elliptical; but the English idiom expresses its meaning whether we take the omitted noun to be "voice," or "consent," or "mind."

**To make excuse.**—*To beg off* would, perhaps, be too colloquial, but it exactly expresses the force of the Greek verb.

**I have bought a piece of ground.**—The Greek noun implies a little more than the English—better, perhaps, *a farm* (see Notes on Mark vi. 36); and the tense in each case is strictly one in which a man naturally speaks of the immediate past—"I bought but now."

(19) **Five yoke of oxen.**—The number was one which came within the reach of any peasant farmer of moderate competence. (Comp. Elisha's twelve yoke of oxen, 1 Kings xix. 19.)

(20) **I have married a wife.**—It may be noted that the Law of Moses allowed men to plead this, and the building of a house, or planting of a vineyard, as a ground for exemption from military service (Deut. xx. 5—7). The sin of the invited guests was that they treated the invitation to the feast as though it were as burdensome as a military conscription. In the interpretation of the parable, the bearing of this is obvious. Men are invited to the highest spiritual blessings, and they look askance at the invitation, as though it called them to what was simply a weariness to the flesh, and "beg off" under a hundred miserable pretences.

(21) **The master of the house being angry . . .**—The element of righteous indignation is more strongly emphasised in the analogous parable of Matt. xxii. 6, 7, where the mere apathy of those who were invited passes into scornful outrage.

**The streets and lanes . . .**—See Note on Matt. vi. 2. The former word includes the "piazza" or "place" of an Eastern town; the latter is the long, narrow "street" or "lane" hardly wide enough for a man to ride through. It is the word used for the "street called straight" in Damascus (Acts ix. 11). In the application of the parable these represent the by-ways of Jewish life—the suburbs, and the wretched courts and alleys, which no scribe deigned to enter, and which lay entirely outside the notice and the functions of the priesthood. "The poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind" are the publicans and sinners and harlots and men of violence, who obeyed the summons and pressed eagerly into the kingdom. The repetition of the same four adjectives as had been used in verse 13 is singularly suggestive. Our Lord was following, in the spiritual feast of His kingdom, the very rule which He had given for those who made great feasts on earth. Each class may possibly represent some spiritual fact which would seem to men a disqualification, but which was, for the pitying love of Christ, the very ground of invitation and acceptance.

(22) **It is done as thou hast commanded.**—Literally, *What thou didst command is come to pass.*

(23) **The highways and hedges.**—In the framework of the parable, this points to a yet lower class of the population of an Eastern country—to the tramps and the squatters who had no home, and who were content to sleep under the shelter of a hedge or fence. For the most part, these were low walls or palisades, rather than hedges in the English sense of the word. In the application of the parable, the men thus brought in can hardly be any other than the wanderers of the outlying Gentile world.

**Compel them to come in.**—It would have seemed all but incredible, had it not been too painfully and conspicuously true, that men could have seen in these words a sanction to the employment of force and pains and penalties as means of converting men to the faith of Christ. To us it seems almost a truism to say that such means may produce proselytes and hypocrites, but cannot possibly produce converts. There is, of course, something that answers to this "compulsion" in the work of Christian preachers, but the weapons of their warfare are not carnal (2 Cor. x. 4), and the constraint which they bring to bear on men is that of "the love of Christ" (2 Cor. v. 14) The only instances of the other kind of compulsion in the Apostolic age are when Saul "compelled" men and women to blaspheme (Acts xxvi. 11), or the Judaisers "compelled" Gentile converts to be circumcised (Gal. ii. 14, vi. 12).

**That my house may be filled.**—It is obvious that we cannot introduce space-limits into the interpretation of the parable. The gates of the Father's house are open for evermore, and in its "many mansions" (John xiv. 2) there is, and ever will be, room for all who come.

(24) **None of those men which were bidden . . .**—Here again we may not press a literal interpretation of the parable. The absolute exclusion of the whole company of the first-invited guests has its antitype in the general rejection of Israel from fellowship with the Church of Christ. It lies in the very nature of a parable that it deals roughly with general facts, and so it passes over in this instance what would have answered to the admission of a chosen few, "the

(25) And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, (26) If any *man* come to me, [a] and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. (27) And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. (28) For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish *it?* (29) Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish *it*, all that behold *it* begin to mock him, (30) saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. (31) Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? (32) Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. (33) So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

(34) Salt *is* good: [b] but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? (35) It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; *but* men

[a] Matt. 10. 37.

[b] Matt. 5. 13.

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remnant according to the election of grace" (Rom. xi. 5.)

(26) **If any man come to me, and hate not his father.**—Like words had been spoken before, as in Matt. x. 37—39, where see Notes. Here they appear in a yet stronger form, "not hating" taking the place of "loving more," and they are spoken, not to the Twelve only, but to the whole multitude of eager would-be followers. Self-renunciation, pushed, if necessary, to the extremest issues, is with Jesus the one indispensable condition of discipleship. He asks for nothing less than the heart, and that cannot be given by halves.

(27) **Whosoever doth not bear his cross . .**—See Note on Matt. x. 38. As now uttered, however, the words had a fresh significance as interpreted by what the disciples had heard from their Master's lips between Peter's confession and the Transfiguration (chap. ix. 22, 23). That "bearing of the cross" was becoming every day more clear and terrible in its growing nearness.

(28—30) **Which of you, intending to build a tower . . ?**—The words do not depend for their meaning on any local or personal allusion, but it is quite possible that their force may have been heightened for those who heard them by the memory of recent facts. Pilate had begun to build—certainly an aqueduct, probably a tower—and had not been able to finish. (See Notes on chap. xiii. 4; Matt. xxvii. 16.) He had not "counted the cost," and when he was hindered from laying hands on the Corban, or treasure of the Temple, his resources failed.

(31) **What king, going to make war against another king . . ?**—Here also there may have been a side-glance at contemporary history. The Tetrarch's divorce of his first wife had involved him in a war with her father Aretas, an Arabian king or ethnarch (see Note on chap. iii. 14), in which his army was destroyed, and the Jewish historian sees in this the commencement of all his subsequent misfortunes (Jos. *Ant.* v., xviii. 5, § 1).

In the spiritual interpretation of the two parables, the tower reminds us of the house in Matt. vii. 24—27, and so stands for the structure of a holy life reared on the one Foundation; the warfare brings to our remembrance the conflict described in Matt. xii. 29. Here it stands partly for the conflict which every Christian carries on against sin, the world, and the devil, and of which we should take a clear estimate before we enter on it, partly for the greater war on which Christ Himself had entered, and of which He too had counted the cost—that being, in His case, nothing less than the sacrifice of His own life.

(32) **Desireth conditions of peace.**—Literally, *the things that make for peace.* The phrase is the same as that in chap. xix. 42, "the things that belong unto thy peace." Are we to see any special significance in this addition to the general teaching of the previous verse, and if so, what is it? The answer seems to be that what our Lord teaches is the necessity of thoroughness in what we do. If we cannot make up our minds to the cost involved in warring against the world and its evil, we had better come to terms with it, and live in such peace as we can thus gain. If we shrink from the thought of fighting against God, we had better accept His conditions of peace. The worst folly of all is to enter into the conflict with a wavering will, not caring to know what "the things belonging to our peace" actually are, or to endeavour to stand apart in an impossible neutrality. Taking the highest application of the parable, He who spoke it had counted the cost, and therefore carried on the war with evil to the last, and would make no terms with it.

(33) **Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not . . .**—Better, *that renounceth not.* This, then, was the immediate lesson which the company of eager disciples had to learn: to say good-bye to their "all," whatever that might be. Fishing-nets and hired servants, or great possessions, or ease and safety, or besetting sins, or fancied righteousness—all had to be renounced. The word for "forsake" is that which was afterwards used in the baptismal formula, "I *renounce* the devil and all his works," and the same as that which is translated "bidding farewell" in chap. ix. 61, Acts xviii. 18.

(34) **Salt is good.**—The words are all but identical with those of Matt. v. 13, and resemble those of Mark ix. 50. (See Notes on those passages.) They appear now, however, in a very different context, and the train of thought is not at first sight so clear. The common element in all three instances is that salt represents the purifying element in life, the principle of unselfish devotion. Here, the special aspect of that element is self-renunciation. In proportion as that is incomplete, the salt loses its savour. The question, Wherewith shall it be salted? is asked as in the accents of almost hopeless sadness. What other purifying influences can be brought to bear on us when the love of Christ has failed?

(35) **It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill.**—The illustration, differing as it does from that in Matt. v. 13 and Mark ix. 50, proves the

cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

CHAPTER XV.—(1) Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. (2) And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

(3) And he spake this parable unto them, saying, (4) What man of you,[a] having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? (5) And when he hath found *it*, he layeth *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing. (6) And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. (7) I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

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[a] Matt. 18. 12.

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independence of the saying as here recorded. A new use of salt, distinct from that of preserving food, or its symbolic meaning in sacrifice, is brought before us, and becomes the ground-work of a new parable. The use is obviously a lower and humbler one than the others. The salt serves, mingling with the dung-hill, to manure and prepare the ground for the reception of the seed. Bear this in mind, and the interpretation of the parable, connected, as it thus is, with that of the Fig-tree (see Note on chap. xiii. 8), is obvious. A corrupt church cannot even exercise an influence for good over the secular life of the nation which it represents. The religious man whose religion has become an hypocrisy cannot even be a good citizen, or help others forward in the duties of their active life by teaching or example. The church and the individual man are alike fit only to be "cast out"—to become, *i.e.*, a by-word and proverb of reproach. Our Lord's sense, if we may so speak, of the depth and fulness of the meaning of His words, is shown by His emphatic reproduction of the words that had accompanied His first parable, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

## XV.

(1) **Then drew near unto him . . .**—Better, *and all the publicans and the sinners were drawing near to hear Him.* There is not quite the same direct sequence in the Greek as in the English, but what follows comes naturally after the mention of the "multitudes" in chap. xiv. 25. Publicans and sinners knew that Jesus had turned, as in indignation, from the house of the Pharisee, and this, it may be, gave them courage to approach Him.

(2) **And the Pharisees and scribes . . .**—Here, too, we may well believe that the speakers were some of the guests of chap. xiv. 15. They had followed Him to see what He would do, and were at once startled and shocked to find the Teacher who had spoken so sternly to those who were professedly godly, not only talking to, but eating with, those who were, at any rate, regarded as ungodly and sinful.

(4) **What man of you, having an hundred sheep . . .?**—The meaning of the parable is so clear that it requires but little in the way of explanation. It gains, however, fresh force and interest if we remember that it followed on the great parable of the Good Shepherd in John x. 1—16, and on the compassion for the lost sheep of which we read in Matt. ix. 36. The thought was, if we may use the language which rises to our lips, a dominant idea in the mind of Him who spoke. The primary application of that idea is clearly to be found in the immediate occasion of the parable, in the love which bids the Son of Man to concentrate His thoughts and energy and prayers on some one soul among those publicans and sinners who were thus gathered together; but it is, at least, a legitimate extension of it to think of it as embracing also His whole redemptive work as the Son of God, leaving the "ninety and nine," the hosts of unfallen angels and archangels, or, it may be, unfallen beings more like ourselves in other worlds than ours, and coming to the rescue of the collective humanity which had fallen and wandered from the fold.

(5) **And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders.**—Here again we have a three-fold series of parallel applications: the love of Jesus for each wandering sheep, bearing and sustaining it in its weakness; the love which led Him to take upon Him our nature, and to bear its infirmities; the love which leads those in whom the mind of Christ is formed to follow in His footsteps, and to act as He acted.

(6) **He calleth together his friends and neighbours.**—The recurrence of the two words so soon after chap. xiv. 12 is suggestive. There are times when we do well to recognise the natural and social ties that bind man and man. Chiefly is it right to do so when we make them sharers in our own spiritual life, and raise and purify their life by calling on them to sympathise, not with our sufferings only, but with our purer and nobler joys. In its bearing upon our Lord's own work we may think of His "friends and neighbours" as being the disciples whom He had chosen; we may think also of "the angels of God," and the spirits of the just made perfect, who rejoice over one sinner that repenteth.

(7) **Ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.**—As regards the men and women among whom our Lord carried on His work, we cannot see in these words anything but a grave and indignant protest, veiled under the form of an apparent concession, against the self-righteousness of the Pharisees. His call to repent had been addressed to all. That all offended in many things; that for a man to say he had not sinned was a lying boast—this was the first postulate of every preacher of the gospel, whatever school of thought he might represent (Rom. iii. 23; Jas. iii. 2; 1 John i. 8). Once, indeed, the opposite thought had appeared in the devotional utterance of a penitent Israelite—"Thou therefore, O Lord, that art the God of the just, hast not appointed repentance to the just, as to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, which have not sinned against Thee" (*Prayer of Manasses* in the *Apocrypha*); but there it was accompanied by personal contrition and confession. The man felt in his humility, how unlike he was to those saints of God. It was reserved for the Pharisees to develop the thought

(8) Either what woman having ten pieces of silver,[1] if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find *it?* (9) And when she hath found *it,* she calleth *her* friends and *her* neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost. (10) Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

(11) And he said, A certain man had two sons: (12) and the younger of them said to *his* father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth *to me.*

[1] *Drachma,* here translated *a piece of silver,* is the eighth part of an ounce, which cometh to sevenpence halfpenny, and is equal to the Roman penny, Matt. 18. 28.

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into the conviction that they were the just persons who needed no repentance, and that all their worship should consist in thanksgiving that they were so. (See Note on chap. xviii. 11.)

(8) **Either what woman having ten pieces of silver.**—The main lesson of the parable that thus opens is, of course, identical with that of the Lost Sheep. We are justified, however, in assuming that the special features of each were meant to have a special meaning, and that we have therefore more than a mere ornamental variation of imagery. Looking to these points of difference we note (1) the use of the silver coin (the *drachma*) as a symbol of the human soul. Here the reason of the choice lies on the surface. The coin is what it is because it has on it the king's image and superscription. Man is precious because he too has the image and superscription of the great King, the spiritual attributes of Thought and Will, by which he resembles God, stamped upon him. (2) There is, perhaps, a special significance in the fact that the coin is lost *in* the house, while the sheep strays *from* the fold. What seems implied here is the possibility that a soul that is precious in the sight of God may be lost even within the society, Israel or the Church of Christ, which is for the time being the visible house of God. (3) It is a woman who seeks, and not a man, and the change, at least, reminds us of the woman in the parable of the Leaven. (See Note on Matt. xiii. 33.) It is hardly an adequate explanation in either case, though it may be true in itself, that the variation was made to interest a different class of hearers, the women who were listening, who had no experience in going after the sheep that was lost. We must at least see in it the lesson that what we call feminine virtues and graces are needed for the deliverance of souls that have fallen—patience, and diligence, and minute observation—not less than what we think of as the more manly qualities of courage, and enterprise, and endurance. Lastly, in the "woman" of the parable we may venture to see that which answers in part to the ideal representation of Wisdom in the book of Proverbs (chaps. viii., ix.), in part to the Church as answering in its collective unity to the ideal of womanhood, as Christ Himself does to the ideal of manhood (Eph. v. 23).

**Doth not light a candle, and . . . . seek diligently . . . ?**—The symbolic meaning of each act lies almost on the surface. To "light the candle" can be nothing else than to put forth the full power of truth and holiness. To "sweep the house" can be nothing else than to use all available means for discovering the possible good that lies hidden or seemingly lost. In the later actual life of the Church, faithful preaching of the word answers to the one, faithful organisation of charity to the other. The rest of the parable is simply an identical reproduction, *mutatis mutandis,* of the conclusion of the former.

(11) **And he said, A certain man had two sons.**—We enter here on one of the parables which are not only peculiar to St. Luke's Gospel, but have something of a different character, as giving more than those we find in the other Gospels, the incidents of a story of common daily life. As with the Good Samaritan, it seems open to us to believe that it rested on a substratum of facts that had actually occurred. It is obvious that in the then social state of Palestine, brought into contact as the Jews were with the great cities of the Roman empire, such a history as that here recorded must have been but too painfully familiar.

In the immediate application of the parable, the father is the great Father of the souls of men; the elder son represents the respectably religious Pharisees; the younger stands for the class of publicans and sinners. In its subsequent developments it applies to the two types of character which answers to these in any age or country. On a wider scale, but with a less close parallelism, the elder son may stand for Israel according to the flesh; the younger for the whole heathen world. Looking back to the genealogies of Gen. v. 10, ix. 18, and even (according to the true construction of the words) x. 21, they correspond respectively to the descendants of Shem and those of Japheth. It is obvious from the whole structure of the parable that the elder son cannot represent the unfallen part of God's creation; and, so far as it goes, this tells against that interpretation of the ninety and nine sheep, or the nine pieces of silver.

(12) **The younger of them said to his father.**—In its bearing on the individual life, the younger son represents the temper that is eager for independence, self-asserting, energetic; the elder that which is contemplative, devout, ceremonial, quiescent. As the latter pre-eminently characterises, as noticed above, the sons of Shem as distinguished from those of Japheth, the Semitic as distinct from the Aryan race, the younger son represents primarily the Jew who has yielded to non-Jewish tendencies; and on the wider scale of interpretation, stands for the whole Gentile world. The contrast between the Esau and Jacob types of character is reproduced (Gen. xxv. 27), only here the elder brother answers to Jacob and the younger to Esau, the variation indicating that the former is with all its short comings the natural heir of the double portion of the first-born in the spiritual inheritance of God's kingdom. Israel remains within comparatively narrow limits of thought and habitation. Japheth is "enlarged" (Gen. ix. 27) and goes forth with all his marvellous gifts of speech and thought, and fancy and invention.

**Divided unto them his living.**—In the normal scale of distribution, the elder son would have as his portion two-thirds of the personal, and possibly also of the real, property, the younger the remainder. In the framework of the story, the father and the elder son become, as it were, tenants in common (verse 31), the former still retaining the general direction of affairs. The state of things so described represents roughly the life of Israel under its theocracy, acknowledging God as its true King and Father.

And he divided unto them *his* living. (13) And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. (14) And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. (15) And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. (16) And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him. (17) And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! (18) I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, (19) and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. (20) And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. (21) And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. (22) But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put *it* on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on *his* feet: (23) and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill *it*; and let us eat, and be merry: (24) for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. (25) Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing. (26) And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. (27) And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. (28) And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him. (29) And he answering said to *his* father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: (30) but as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. (31) And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. (32) It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

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(13) **Took his journey into a far country.**—Such instances of emigration were, we may believe, familiar things in most towns of Galilee and Judæa. The young man left his home, and started, bent on pleasure or on gain, for Alexandria, or Rome, or Corinth, and rumour came home of riotous living, and a fortune wasted upon harlots, sabbaths broken, synagogues unvisited, perhaps even of participation in idol feasts. In the interpretation that lies below the surface, the "far country" is the state of the human spirit, of the Gentile world, in their wanderings far off from God. The "riotous living" is the reckless waste of noble gifts and highest energies on unbridled sensuality of life, or sensuous, *i.e.*, idolatrous, forms of worship. The fearful history traced in Rom. i. 19—32, is but too faithful a picture of the wanderings of the younger son.

**Riotous.**—The exact meaning of the word is *prodigal, thriftless.*

(14) **There arose a mighty famine in that land.**—This again was no unwonted incident. The famine which "came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar" (Acts xi. 28) was more extensive and memorable than others, but it was far from standing alone. And now the pinch came. His treasure was gone, and for the fulness of bread there was hunger and "cleanness of teeth" (Amos iv. 6). In the individual interpretation of the parable, the mighty famine is the yearning of the soul's unsatisfied desire, the absence of its true food, of "the bread that cometh down from heaven." (See Notes on John vi. 32.) In its wider range it is the craving of humanity for what it cannot find when appetites are not satisfied, and their wonted supply ceases—the famine, not of bread and of water, but of hearing the word of the Lord (Amos viii. 11); the want of a message from the Eternal Father to sustain the life of His children.

(15) **Joined himself.**—Literally *clave to*, or, *attached himself to.* The verb is the same as that used of the husband cleaving to his wife in Matt. xix. 5, and thus expresses the absolute dependence of the famished man upon one who was ready to help him.

**To a citizen.**—Literally, *to one of the citizens.* In the outer story of the parable, this would emphasise the misery into which the man had fallen. The son of Abraham had to depend upon the bounty of an alien. In the two lines of interpretation, the "citizen" is one who all along has been of the world, worldly, living for no higher end than gain or pleasure. The prodigal is as one who, called to a higher life, has forfeited its blessedness, and now depends for such joy as he is capable of on those who are more completely identified with evil. It is, perhaps, natural that as we diverge more widely from the primary scope of the parable, its application in detail should become more difficult; and looking at the parable, as giving an outline of the history of the human race, one fails to see who answers to the "citizen." Not the Tempter, the great author of the world's evil, for the citizen is one of many. Nor is it the part of the citizen here to tempt to evil, but rather to be half-unconsciously God's instrument in punishing it—half-unconsciously, again, the means of preserving the evil-doer from perishing, and so of making a subsequent deliverance possible. It is truer to facts, therefore, to see in the "citizen" the representative of the wisdom and knowledge, maxims of worldly prudence or principles of ethics without religion, which for a time sustain the soul, and "still the hungry edge of appetite," and keep it from sinking utterly, while yet they leave it in its wretchedness and do not satisfy its cravings.

**To feed swine.**—We feel at once the shudder that would pass through the hearers of the parable as they listened to these words. Could there be for an Israelite a greater depth of debasement? In the inner teaching of the parable, this perhaps implies a state in which the man's will and energies have but the one work of ministering to his baser appetites. Such, in the long-run, is the outcome of the wisdom described in the previous note as answering to the "citizen."

(16) **He would fain have filled his belly.**—It is singular that very many of the best MSS. give the simpler reading, "desired to be filled or satisfied." It is open to suppose either that they shrank from the reading in the text as too coarse, or that the later MSS. introduced "filled his belly" as more vivid and colloquial; or, as seems probable, that there may have been a variation of phrase even in the original autograph MSS. of St. Luke.

**The husks that the swine did eat.**—The word is generic, but it is commonly identified with the long bean-like pods of the carob-tree, or *Ceratonia siliqua*, or St. John's bread, in which some have seen the "locusts" of Matt. iii. 4. They contain a good deal of saccharine matter, and are commonly used as food for swine in Syria and Egypt. Spiritually, they answer to the sensual pleasures in which men who are as the swine, identified with brute appetites, find adequate sustenance. The soul that was born to a higher inheritance cannot so satisfy itself. It seeks to be "like a beast with lower pleasures," but it is part of the Father's discipline that that baser satisfaction is beyond its reach.

(17) **And when he came to himself.**—The phrase is wonderfully suggestive. The man's guilt was, that he had been self-indulgent; but he had been living to a self which was not his true self. The first step in his repentance is to wake as out of an evil dream, and to be conscious of his better nature, and then there comes the memory of happier days which is as "Sorrow's crown of sorrow." The "hired servants" are obviously those who serve God, not in the spirit of filial love, but from the hope of a reward. Even in that lower form of duty they find what satisfies their wants. They have not the craving of unsatisfied desire which the son feels who has cast away his sonship. He envies them, and would fain be as they are.

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(18) **I will arise and go to my father.**—This, then, was the firstfruits of repentance. He remembers that he has a father, and trusts in that father's love; but he dares not claim the old position which he had so recklessly cast away. He is content to be as one of the "hired servants." Spiritually, the first impulse of the contrite heart is to take the lowest place, to wish for the drudgery of daily duties, or even menial service, if only it may be near its Father in heaven, and by slow degrees regain His favour and earn the wages of His praise.

**I have sinned . . .**—More strictly, *I sinned*, as going back in thought to the first act of sin as virtually including all that grew out of it.

(20) **When he was yet a great way off.**—In the story of the parable we must think of the wanderer as coming back weary, foot-sore, hungry, and in rags. In the interpretation, the state of the penitent is that of one who is poor in spirit, hungering and thirsting after righteousness (Matt. v. 3, 6), with knees that are feeble and hands that hang down (Heb. xii. 12), conscious of his nakedness and needing something else than the "filthy rags" of his own righteousness (Isa. lxiv. 6) to cover it. And he is yet "a great way off"—not as yet near the home of peace, the light of the Father's countenance—but even there, there comes to him the joy of all joys, the love of the Father finds him, and he is conscious of the love. There is the contact of his soul with the Divine Presence which answers to the Father's kiss.

(21) **Father, I have sinned against heaven.**—The iteration of the self-same words comes to us with a wonderful power and pathos. The contrite soul does not play with its contrition, or seek to vary its expression. But the change is as suggestive as the repetition. Now that he has seen his father, he cannot bring himself to say again, "Make me as one of thy hired servants." That had been a natural and right wish before; it would savour of unreality and hypocrisy now. This also has its analogue in the history of true penitents. In the first stirrings of contrition they stand afar off, and as they confess their sins hardly dare to hope for restoration to the blessedness of sons; but when they have felt the Father's kiss, though still confessing that they are unworthy to be called sons, they cannot be satisfied with anything less than sonship.

(22) **Bring forth the best robe.**—It is hardly necessary, perhaps, in such a parable, to press the symbolic interpretation of each minute detail; but in this instance the symbolism lies so near the surface that it is at least well to ask ourselves what meaning either earlier or later associations would lead the disciples to attach to them. The "best robe" cannot well be other than the "garment of praise" (Isa. lxi. 3), the vesture of righteousness, the new life and immortality with which it is the desire of the penitent to be clothed upon; the ring, as the signet upon the right hand (Jer. xxii. 24), must be the token of the special favour of the Giver, the seal of his "calling and election;" the shoes must answer to that "preparation" or "readiness" which comes from the gospel of peace (Eph. vi. 15), and which makes him eager to do his work as a messenger who proclaims that gospel to others, and which he need not lay aside (comp. Ex. iii. 5) even when he treads on the "holy ground" where man holds communion with God, the forgiven and restored son with the Eternal Father.

(23) **Bring hither the fatted calf.**—It is interesting to remember the impression which this part of the parable made on one of the great teachers of the Church as early as the second century. Irenæus (see *Introduction*) saw in it an illustration of what seemed to him the special characteristic of St. Luke's Gospel, viz., the stress which it lays on the priestly aspect of our Lord's work and ministry. We note, after our more modern method, (1) that in the framework of the story, the definite article points to "the calf" that had been fattened as for some special feast of joy. It answers accordingly to the "feast of fat things" of Isa. xxv. 6—*i.e.*, to the joy of the full fruition of the presence of God; and there is, perhaps, in the command to "kill it" (the word used is the technical one for slaying a sacrificial victim) a half-suggestion that this was only possible through a sacrifice and death. The fatted calf thus comes to represent to us that of which the Eucharistic feast is at once a symbol, a witness, and a pledge.

(24) **This my son was dead.**—The words, looked at merely as part of the story, have a wonderful pathos. Absence, alienation, the self-chosen shame, this had made the father think of the son as "dead." Death would indeed have been far easier to bear. Spiritually, we are taught that repentance is nothing less than the passing from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, from the "graves of lust" (Num. xi. 34) to the power of the resurrection. The "lost" and "found" appear as furnishing the link that connects this with the preceding parables, and makes the trilogy, as it were, complete.

(25) **He heard musick and dancing.**—This brings in a new feature. The father, like the chief actors in the other parables, had called together his "friends and neighbours," and they were rejoicing after the manner of the East. There was "musick," literally, a *symphony*, or *concert*, implying voices as well as instruments. The word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, but it is found in the LXX. version of Dan. iii. 5, 10, where indeed the Hebrew,

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CHAPTER XVI.—(1) And he said also unto his disciples, There was a

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or rather the Aramaic, word is but the Greek transliterated. The word for "dancing," also, is found here only in the New Testament, and is the same as that used, in classical Greek, for the chorus of the Greek drama, and from which we get our English "choir." It probably implied, *i.e.*, song as well as dancing. Spiritually, these outward signs of gladness answer to the overflowing demonstrative joy which thrills through the hearts of those whose sympathies with God's work in the souls of men are keen and strong, and to which those who live only in the colder religionism of outward service are so insensible that they cannot understand it. They ask now, as the elder son asked, as the Pharisees were in their hearts asking, what it means? Why this departure from the even tenor of men's wonted life?

(27) **Because he hath received him safe and sound.**—Literally, *in health.* The participle is the same which we have noted as characteristic of St. Luke and St. Paul in chaps. v. 31, vii. 10.

(28) **And he was angry, and would not go in.**—This, then, was the first feeling. He who professed obedience to his father is out of harmony with his father's mind. He "shuts love out," and, as by a righteous judgment, is himself "shut out from love."

(29) **Lo, these many years do I serve thee.**—The very word "I serve," as a slave serves, is eminently suggestive. The obedience had all along been servile, prompted by fear and hope, even as the slave's obedience is. The language put into the mouth of the elder son is clearly meant to represent the habitual thoughts of the Pharisees. They are taken, as it were, after our Lord's manner, as seen in the previous parables, at their own valuation of themselves. They are conscious of no transgressions; but in that very unconsciousness lies the secret of the absence of any sense of joy in being forgiven, of any power to sympathise with the joy of others, even of any satisfaction in the service in which they pride themselves. (Comp. Notes on chap. vii. 47—50.) They are scandalised at the gladness which others feel when a penitent returns to God. It seems like an insult and wrong to themselves. Their life has been one of uniform obedience; they have performed their religious duties. Why is so much stir made about those who have fallen as they never fell?

(30) **As soon as this thy son was come.**—The feeling of discontent passes into scorn and bitterness. The sin of the wanderer is painted at once in the coarsest and darkest colours. The very turn of the phrase, "this thy son," speaks of a concentrated malignity.

(31) **Son, thou art ever with me.**—As applied to the Pharisees in its primary bearing, or to others like the Pharisees in its secondary, it appears at first sight as if the words were spoken from their own point of view, their own self-appreciation, and were therefore ironical. We need not, however, so take them. The words were literally true of the Pharisees, of Israel as a nation, of all who reproduce the Pharisee temper. All outward gifts that God could bestow, the covenants and the law, and the promises, outward ordinances of worship, and the instruction of wise men and scribes —these had all been given to Israel, as like blessings are offered now to all members of the visible Church of Christ, the great family of God. All that was wanted was the power to use these things rightly, as the Father wills, and therefore to enjoy them.

**All that I have is thine.**—More literally, *all mine is thine.*

(32) **It was meet that we should make merry.**—The Greek expresses moral necessity rather than mere fitness. "We must needs rejoice;" it could not be otherwise. The repetition of the same words that had been used before, "he was dead . . ." is singularly emphatic. This, and nothing more or less than this, was the true account of the change that had passed over the wanderer; and this ought to be a source of joy to all his kindred. There is, perhaps, a touch of tenderness as well as reproof in the way in which the scornful "this thy son" is met by "this thy brother." The elder son had forgotten that fact, and had almost disclaimed his own sonship in his scorn for the offender.

## XVI.

(1) **There was a certain rich man, which had a steward.**—There is, perhaps, no single parable that has been subjected to such various and discordant interpretations as this of the Unjust Steward. It seems best to give step by step what seems to be a true exposition of its meaning, and to reserve a survey of other expositions till they can be compared with this.

The word "steward" had, we must remember, been already used by our Lord in chap. xii. 42, and had there pointed, beyond the shadow of a doubt, to the office of the Apostles and other ministers, as dispensers of divine truths, and perhaps also, of the means of grace. So St. Paul, whose language is, as we have seen in so many instances, always important in connection with St. Luke's vocabulary, speaks of himself and his fellow-labourers as "*stewards* of the mysteries of God." He has learnt, may we not say, from the parable, that "it is required in *stewards* that a man be found certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. (2) And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward. (3) Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. (4) I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. (5) So he called every one of his lord's debtors *unto him*, and said unto the first, How much owest

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faithful" (1 Cor. iv. 1, 2). We start, then, with this clue. The Unjust Steward represents primarily the Pharisees and scribes in their teaching and ministerial functions. But though spoken in the hearing of the Pharisees, the parable was addressed, not to them, but "to the disciples." And the reason of this is obvious. They, too, were called to be "stewards;" they, too, collectively and individually, would have to give an account of their stewardship. But if this is what the steward represents, then the rich man, like the "householder" in other parables, can be none else than God, who both appoints the stewards and calls them to account. In the further extension of the parable it is, of course, applicable to all who have any "goods" entrusted to them, any gifts and opportunities, any vocation and ministry in the great kingdom of God.

**The same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.**—(1) The Greek word for "was accused" commonly carries with it the idea of false, calumnious accusation. Probably, however, the idea connected with it, as seen in the word *diabolos*, or *devil*, which is derived from it, is that of malignant accusation, whether the charge were true or false. It is conceivable that it may have been purposely chosen to suggest the thought that the great Adversary was at once tempting the double-minded teachers to their life of hypocrisy, and exulting at their fall. If we ask why this was only suggested and not more directly expressed, as it would have been if some one accuser had been named, the answer is found in the fact that the one great Accuser has many mouth-pieces, *diaboli* acting under the *diabolos* (the Greek word stands for "false accusers" in Tit. ii. 3), and that there was no lack of such comments, more or less malevolent, on the inconsistencies of the professedly religious class. (2) There is an obvious purpose in using the same word, in the hearing of the same persons, as that which, in chap. xv. 13, had described the excesses of the Prodigal Son. The Pharisees had heard that parable, and even if they had caught the bearing of the language which portrayed the character of the elder son, had flattered themselves that they were, at all events, free from the guilt of the younger. They had not "wasted their substance in riotous living." Now they were taught that the "goods" committed to them might be wasted in other ways than by being "devoured" in company with "harlots." They were guilty of that sin in proportion as they had failed to use what they had been entrusted with for the good of men and for God's glory.

(2) **How is it that I hear this of thee?**—(1) The opening words of the steward's master imply wonder as well as indignation. They remind us so far of the words of the lord of the vineyard in another parable, "Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" (Isa. v. 4). Speaking after the manner of men, it was a marvel and a mystery that men with so high a calling as the scribes and teachers of Israel should have proved so unfaithful to their trust. (2) The words that follow, "Give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward," while they admit legitimately enough a personal application to each individual at the close of any period of trust and probation, and therefore at the close of life, are yet far from being limited to that application, and in their primary significance, do not even admit it. The close of a stewardship, for a party like the Pharisees—for a school like that of the scribes—for any Church or section of a Church—is when its day of judgment comes, when its work in the Kingdom is done, when history, and God in history, pass their sentence upon it. And that day of judgment was coming fast upon those who then heard the parable.

(3) **I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.**—In the outer framework of the parable there is something eminently characteristic in this utterance of the steward's thoughts. He has lost the manliness and strength which would have fitted him for actual labour. He retains the false shame which makes him prefer fraud to poverty. He shudders at the thought that it might be his lot to sit, like Lazarus, and ask an alms at the rich man's door. Spiritually, we may see what happens to a religious caste or order, like the Pharisees, when it forfeits its true calling by misuse. It has lost the power to prepare the ground for future fruitfulness by the "digging," which answers, as in chap. xiii. 8, to the preliminary work of education and other influences that lie outside direct religious activity. It is religious and ecclesiastical, or it is nothing. It is ashamed to confess its spiritual poverty, and to own that it is "poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev. iii. 17). Anything seems better than either of those alternatives.

(4) **I am resolved what to do.**—More literally, *I know*, or even, *I knew*, as of a man to whom a plan occurs suddenly. The dramatic abruptness of the parable leaves us uncertain who "they" are that are to "receive" him. The context that follows immediately supplies the deficiency. What answers to this, in the interpretation, is the moment when a Church or party or an individual teacher, halts between two policies—one that of striving after righteousness, and the other of secular expediency—and makes up its mind to adopt that which promises the most immediate and most profitable results.

(5) **So he called every one of his lord's debtors.**—The debtors might be either men who had bought their wheat and their oil at the hands of the steward; or, as the sequel renders more probable, tenants who, after the common custom of the East, paid their rent in kind. Who, we ask, are the "debtors," in the interpretation of the parable? The Lord's Prayer supplies the answer to that question. The "debtors" are those who have sinned against God, who have left undone the things which they were bound to do, who have made no return for the outward blessings they have received. The unfaithful Church or party tries to secure its position by working on the lower nature of those who

thou unto my lord? (6) And he said, An hundred measures[1] of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. (7) Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures[2] of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. (8) And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the

[1] The word *Batus* in the original containeth nine gallons three quarts.

[2] The word here interpreted *a measure* in the original containeth about fourteen bushels and a pottle.

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have the sense of that burden upon them. It neither gives the sense of peace or pardon, nor asserts the righteous severity of God's commandments. It keeps their consciences uneasy, and traffics in its absolutions.

(6) **Take thy bill, and sit down quickly.**—The better MSS. give, *thy bills*, or *thy documents*, in the plural. These would include that which answered to the modern lease, the contract which specified the rent, and probably also the memorandum of the due delivery of the annual share of the produce. In this case the measure is the Hebrew *bath*, which has been variously estimated, the data being uncertain and conflicting, at from one to three gallons to the higher number stated in the marginal note. The steward by thus tempting the debtors with an immediate gain, and making them sharers in his frauds, took the readiest and most direct means of securing at once their favour and their silence. That which answered to this in the first application of the parable was the conduct of the Pharisees, just in proportion as they lost the moral force which they had once exercised, in accommodating their casuistry to the selfishness of their followers. Thus by their Corban teaching (see Note on Matt. xv. 5) they released men from the obligation of supporting parents, and made perjury easy by their artificial distinctions as to oaths (Matt. v. 33; xxiii. 16—22), gave a wide license to lust by their doctrine of divorce (Matt. v. 31; xix. 3), and substituted the paying tithes of mint, and anise, and cummin for the weightier matters of the Law (Matt. xxiii. 23). Like phenomena have been seen in analogous circumstances in the history of the Christian Church. When Leo X. sent forth his preachers of indulgences with their short and easy methods of salvation; when Jesuit confessors were to be found in every court of Europe, doing nothing to preserve their votaries from a fathomless licentiousness; when Protestant theologians tuned their voice according to the time, and pandered to the passions of a Henry VIII. or a Landgrave of Hesse; when the preachers of justification by faith turned the grace of God into lasciviousness, or made it compatible with a life of money-making worldliness; when men lower the standard of duty to gain support and popularity—there the act of the steward in bidding the debtor write fifty measures, when he owed a hundred, finds its counterpart.

(7) **An hundred measures of wheat.**—Here the measure is the Hebrew *cor*, which is reckoned as equal to ten *baths* (the latter, however, is a liquid, the former, a dry measure), and accordingly varies, according to the estimate given above, from thirteen to about ninety-seven gallons. One calculation makes it nearly equal to the English "quarter."

(8) **And the lord commended . . .**—The "lord" is, of course, the rich man of the parable, the steward's master. He too, in the outer framework of the story, is one of the children of this world, and he admires the sharpness and quickness of the steward's action. In the interpretation of the story, we trace once more the grave, half-veiled indignation, more keenly incisive than if the veil had been withdrawn, which so often appears in this phase of our Lord's teaching. If this world were all, there would be a wisdom worthy of praise when a Church or its teachers adapted themselves to men's passions or interests at the expense of Truth. That which makes such action hateful is that by so doing the children of light transform themselves into the children of this world.

**The unjust steward.**—Literally, *the steward of unrighteousness*, St. Luke using the half-Hebrew idiom of a genitive of the characteristic attribute. (Comp. the "mammon of unrighteousness" in verse 9, and the "unjust judge" of chap. xviii. 6, where the same idiom is used.)

**The children of this world are in their generation wiser . . .**—Better, *for their generation*, with a view, *i.e.*, to their own advantages and interests, and those of others like them.

**Wiser than the children of light.**—The word for "wise" is that used by our Lord in "wise as serpents" (see Notes on Matt. x. 16). In "children of light" (literally, *sons of light*), though usage has made the Hebrew idiom familiar, we have another example of the genitive of characteristic attribute. We may note the recurrence of the phrase (with the variation of the Greek word for "children" instead of "sons") in Eph. v. 8 as another instance of the way in which the phraseology of St. Paul was influenced by that of the words of the Lord Jesus collected by his fellow-labourer. "Children of light" are those in whom light is the prevailing element of their life, and they are necessarily also children of God; for "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John i. 5).

It must be left to the thoughtful reader to judge how far this exposition of the parable is coherent and satisfying in itself, and in harmony with the general teaching of our Lord. Those who will may compare it, apart from the real or imagined authority of this or that name, with the other interpretations which find in it a lesson (1) to the publicans (like that of chap. iii. 13) to exact no more than that which is appointed them; or (2) to all Christians to be as lenient in dealing with their "debtors" as the steward was with his master's; or (3) a simple example of quickness and prudence in things temporal, which Christians are to reproduce, *mutatis mutandis*, in dealing with things eternal; or (4) which hold, as the main point of the parable, that the steward's master was ignorant of his fradulent collusion with the debtors; or (5) find in the call to give an account of his stewardship nothing but the approach of death; or (6) teach that the master is Mammon, and that the disciples were accused by the Pharisees of wasting his goods when they became followers of Christ; or (7) that the steward stands for the publicans as a class, and then for all Christians generally; or (8) for Judas Iscariot; or (9) for Pontius Pilate; or (10) for our Lord Himself; or (11) for St. Paul; or (12) for an example of the true penitent; or (13) for the devil. The wild diversity of interpretations which this list partially represents, should make any commentator more or less distrustful of what seems to him an adequate and complete exposition; and it children of light. (9) And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon[1] of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. (10) He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. (11) If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon,[2] who will commit to your trust the true *riches*? (12) And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? (13) No servant can serve two masters:[a] for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. (14) And the Pharisees also, who were covetous,

[1] Or, *riches.*

[a] Matt. 6. 24.

[2] Or, *riches.*

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may well be, even after an exposition as full as the conditions of the case seem to render possible, that there are side-lights in the parable which are yet unnoticed, and further applications which, as being founded on real analogies, might be instructive and legitimate.

(9) **And I say unto you.**—The pronoun is emphatic, and stands, as in Matt. v. 22, 28, 32, in contrast with what had gone before.

**Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness.**—On "mammon," comp. Note on Matt. vi. 24. The word was Syriac in its origin, and was found also, as Augustine testifies, in Punic. It was in common use in the Targums or Paraphrases of the Old Testament, in our Lord's time, for "wealth" or "riches," and possibly, as stated by Tertullian, whose authority, as a Carthaginian, may be admitted as of some weight, was applied to some Syrian deity who, like the Greek Plutus, was worshipped as wealth personified. If we admit this view, it explains, what otherwise it is not easy to explain, St. Luke's introduction of the Syriac word instead of its Greek equivalent. "The mammon of unrighteousness," the genitive having the same force as in verse 8, is the wealth to which that character for the most part attaches, wealth wrongly gained and wrongly spent. And yet "of that mammon" —or better, *out of*, or *with, the mammon*—men are to make friends. The right use of wealth in helping the poor, making men happier and better, leading them to repentance and to God, will gain for us friends, perhaps the very persons whom we have helped, perhaps the angels of God who rejoice over one sinner that repenteth, perhaps even Christ and the Father, who will receive us into "everlasting habitations."

**That, when ye fail, . . .**—The better MSS. give "that when *it fails*," so the "mammon," or riches, on which men set their hearts.

**Into everlasting habitations.**—Literally, *everlasting tabernacles.* The word seems chosen, in contrast to the "houses" of verse 4, perhaps in contrast to the "booths" of leaves or branches, transitory and withering in a few days, which entered into the ritual of the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. xxiii. 40, Neh. viii. 15), or with the "tents" which were the symbol of the transitory promises of the older Patriarchs (Heb. xi. 9.)

(10) **He that is faithful in that which is least . . .**—The context shows that by "that which is least" is meant what men call wealth, and which to most of them seems as the greatest, highest good. To be faithful in that is to acknowledge that we have it as stewards, not as possessors, and shall have to give an account of our stewardship. The word of warning was meant, we may believe, specially for the disciples. They, coming, for the most part, from the poorer classes, thought that they were in no danger of worshipping mammon. They are told, probably with special reference to the traitor Judas, that the love of money may operate on a narrow as well as on a wide scale, and that wrong-doing in the one case tests character not less perfectly than in the other. This seems truer to the meaning of "much" than to find in it simply the higher wealth of the kingdom of God, generically different from the former, though this also may be included in the wider operation of the laws thus asserted.

(11) **If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon.**—Better, *if ye were not*, or, *became not.* Here the "true riches" stand in contrast with the vain, deceitful, unrighteous mammon, and answer to the true spiritual wealth of peace, pardon, wisdom, or, in St. Paul's language, here again coloured by St. Luke's, the "unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. iii. 8). Our Lord teaches His disciples, what human religious teachers have so often forgotten, that honesty, integrity, and, as implied in faithfulness, benevolence, in the use of this world's goods, be our portion small or great, is an indispensable condition of all spiritual advancement.

The Greek word for "true" may be noticed as being that which is generally characteristic of St. John. (See Notes on John i. 9; iv. 23.) This is the only instance of its use in the three first Gospels; St. Paul uses it once (1 Thess. i. 9), and then, after companionship with St. Luke. It is found in three passages of the Epistle to the Hebrews (viii. 2; ix. 14, 24; x. 22) twenty-three times in the writings of St. John.

(12) **If ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's . . .**—The ruling idea of the verse is clearly that which the parable had enforced, that in relation to all external possessions and advantages we are stewards and not possessors. The Roman poet had seen that to boast of such things was the emptiest of all vanities—

> "At genus, et proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipsi,
> Vix ea nostra voco."
>
> ["Lineage and name, and all that our own powers
> Have not wrought for us, these I scarce call ours."]

**That which is your own?**—This is obviously identical with the "true riches" of the preceding verse. Wisdom, holiness, peace, these the world has not given, and cannot take away; and even looking to God as the great Giver of these as of other good and perfect gifts, it may be said that they are bestowed by Him as a possession in fee, the reward of the faithful stewardship of all lower gifts and opportunities, so that, though His gift, they become, in very deed, our own.

(13) **No servant can serve two masters.**—See Notes on Matt. vi. 24. Here it obviously comes in close connection with the previous teaching. But its occurrence, in an equally close sequence, in the Sermon on the Mount, shows that it took its place among the axioms of the religious life which our Lord, if we may so speak, loved to reproduce as occasion called for them.

(14) **And the Pharisees also, who were covetous.**—The words are important as showing that they

heard all these things: and they derided him. (15) And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God. (16) The law and the prophets *were* until John:[a] since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. (17) And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass,[b] than one tittle of the law to fail. (18) Whosoever putteth away his wife,[c] and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from *her* husband committeth adultery.

(19) There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine

[b] Matt. 5. 18.

[c] Matt. 5. 32.

[a] Matt. 11. 12.

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had been listening during the previous parable, and that the words, though addressed to the disciples, had been meant also for them. (See Note on verse 1.) The word for "covetous" is literally *lovers of money*, as distinct from more general cupidity, and as being used by St. Paul in 2 Tim. iii. 2, and nowhere else in the New Testament, furnishes another instance of community of language between him and the Evangelist.

**Derided him.**—The verb implies visible rather than audible signs of scorn—the distended nostril, and the sneering lip, the *naso suspendere adunco* of the Roman satirist. It is, *i.e.*, a word that forcibly expresses the physiognomy of contempt (see Gal. vi. 7). Here again we have a word common to the two writers just named. The motive of the derision lies on the surface. That they, the teachers of Israel, should be told that they were like the Unjust Steward, that they were wasting their Lord's goods, that they must make friends with the unrighteous mammon of quite another kind than those whom they were wont to court—this was more than they could stand. They have felt the force of the rebuke, and therefore they stifle it with mockery—

> "A little grain of conscience made them sour."

(15) **Ye are they which justify yourselves before men.**—The character described is portrayed afterwards more fully in the parable of chap. xviii. 9—14. The word there used, "this man went down to his house *justified* rather than the other," is obviously a reference to what is reported here. They forgot, in their self-righteousness and self-vindication, that they stood before God as the Searcher of all hearts.

**That which is highly esteemed among men . . .**—Literally, *that which is high*, or *lifted up*, among men. The word is at once wider and more vivid than the English.

**Abomination . . .**—The word is the same as in "the abomination of desolation" (Matt. xxiv. 15), that which causes physically nausea and loathing. The word seems chosen as the expression of a divine scorn and indignation, which answered, in part, to their "derision," and was its natural result. (Comp. the bold language of Ps. ii. 4, Prov. i. 26, Rev. iii. 16.)

(16) **The law and the prophets were until John.**—See Notes on Matt. xi. 14, 15. What had then been said to the disciples of the Baptist is now reproduced to our Lord's own disciples and to the Pharisees. The latter had closed their eyes to the fact that all previous revelations led up to the work of John, as that in its turn was preparatory for the work of Christ.

**Every man presseth . . .**—The fact asserted, that of a "rush," as we should say, into the Kingdom, but a rush from which the Pharisees had held aloof, answers to the stronger expression in St. Matthew (xi. 12), "the violent take it by force."

(17) **It is easier for heaven and earth to pass.**—See Notes on Matt. v. 18. Our first impression on reading the words here is that there is less logical sequence in their position. They seem unconnected with the teaching as to the mammon of unrighteousness. It is possible that here, as elsewhere, some links of the chain have been dropped; but the explanation that has been given of the preceding parable gives a sufficient connection. The scribes and Pharisees had been tampering with the sacredness of the laws which are not of to-day or yesterday—fixed as the everlasting hills—and they are told that their casuistry cannot set aside the claims of those laws in any single instance, such, *e.g.*, as that which immediately follows.

(18) **Whosoever putteth away his wife.**—On the special points involved, see Notes on Matt. v. 31, 32; xix. 3—9. Here, again, the explanation that has been given of the parable of the Unjust Steward, offers the only satisfactory explanation of the introduction of a topic apparently so irrelevant. The doctrine and discipline of divorce which the Pharisees taught, lowering the sacredness of the life of home, and ministering to the growing laxity of men's morals, was precisely what was meant by the steward's bidding the debtors take their bill and write fifty, or fourscore measures, instead of the hundred. (See Note on verses 6 and 7).

(19) **There was a certain rich man . . .**—Here, also, there is a certain appearance of abruptness. But the sneer of verse 14 explains the sequence of thought. On the one side, among those who listened to our Lord, were the Pharisees, living in the love of money and of the enjoyments which money purchased; on the other, were the disciples, who had left all to follow their Master, poor with the poverty of beggars. The former had mocked at the counsel that they should make friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, who should receive them into everlasting habitations. They are now taught, and the disciples are taught also, what comes of the other friendship that men for the most part secure with money. It is clear that the section of Pharisees for whom the parable was specially designed, were such as those described as being "in king's houses and in soft raiment, and living delicately" (see Notes on Matt. xi. 8; Luke vii. 25)—the scribes, *i.e.*, who had attached themselves to the court of Herod Antipas, the Herodians, or those who, while differing from them politically, were ready to coalesce with them (Matt. xxii. 16; Mark iii. 6), and reproduced their mode of life. In the rich man himself we find, generic as the description is, some features which must at least have reminded those who heard the parable, of the luxurious self-indulgence of the Tetrarch himself. There is the "purple garment," rich with the dyes of Tyre, which was hardly worn, except by kings and princes and generals (see Notes on Matt. xxvii. 28; Mark xv. 17); the *byssus*, or fine linen of Egypt, coupled with purple in Rev. xviii. 12, 16, itself not unfrequently of the same colour. The "faring sumptuously" reminds us of the stately pomp of Herod's feasts. (See Notes on Matt. xiv. 6; Mark vi. 14, 21, and the quotation from

linen, and fared sumptuously every day: (20) and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, (21) and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. (22) And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was

Persius cited in the latter.) If we assume that there is this sketch, as it were, of the Tetrarch's character, it is obvious that the teaching of the parable receives a fresh significance. This, then, was what the scribes, even those that were not avowedly of the Herodian school, who should have been teachers of righteousness, were striving after. This was their highest ideal of happiness, and for this they were content to sacrifice their true calling here and their hopes of eternal life hereafter. It was meet that they should learn what was the outcome of such a life when it passed "behind the veil." We may add, too, that this view enables us to trace a sequence of thought where all at first seems unconnected. The reference to the teaching of the scribes as to divorce (verse 18), naturally suggested the most prominent and most recent instance in which their lax casuistry had shown itself most criminally compliant with the vices of an adulterous and incestuous prince.

**Fared sumptuously.**—More literally, *was sumptuously merry.* The word is the same as that in chap. xv. 32, and we can hardly doubt that there is a designed contrast between the holy mirth and joy in the one case, and the ignoble revelry of the other. There was "good cheer" in each, but of how different a complexion!

(20) **And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus.**—The word for "beggar," it may be noted, is the same as the "poor" of chap. vi. 20. The occurrence in this one solitary instance of a personal name in our Lord's parables, suggests the question, What was meant by it? Three answers present themselves, each of which is more or less compatible with the other two. (1) There may have been an actual beggar of that name known both to the disciples and the Pharisees. (2) The significance of the name, the current Greek form of Eleazar (= "God is the helper"), may have been meant to symbolise the outward wretchedness of one who had no other help. (3) As that which seems most probable, the name may have been intended as a warning to Lazarus of Bethany. He was certainly rich. We have seen some reason to identify him with the young ruler that had great possessions. (See Notes on Matt. xix. 18.) In any case he was exposed to the temptations that wealth brings with it. What more effectual warning could be given him than to hear his own name brought into a parable, as belonging to the beggar who was carried into Abraham's bosom, while his own actual life corresponded more or less closely to that of the rich man who passed into the torments of Hades? Was he not taught in this way, what all else failed to teach him, that if he wished for eternal life he must strip himself of the wealth which made it impossible for him to enter the Kingdom of God? It may be noted that almost every harmonised arrangement of the Gospel history places the parable almost immediately before the death and raising of Lazarus (see Note on John xi. 1), while in some of them the question of the young ruler comes between the two. The combination, in either case, suggests the thought of a continuous process of spiritual education, by which the things that were "impossible with men" were shown to be "possible with God" (Matt. xix. 26). First the picture of the unseen world drawn in symbolic imagery, so as to force itself upon his notice, then an actual experience of the realities of that life; this was what he needed, and this was given him.

**Laid at his gate, full of sores, . . .**—Literally, *at his porch,* or *gateway.* The Greek word for "full of sores" is somewhat more technical than the English one; literally, *ulcerated,* one which a medical writer like St. Luke would use to express a generally ulcerous state of the whole body. The description led, in course of time, to the application of the leper's name to those who suffered from leprosy, as producing an analogous condition, and so we get the terms, *lazar, lazar-house, lazaretto.* In the Italian *lazzaroni* the idea of the beggary is prominent without that of the sores.

(21) **And desiring to be fed with the crumbs.**—The habits of the East, the absence of knives and forks and the like, made the amount of waste of this kind larger than do the habits of modern Europe. (Comp. the language of the Syro-Phœnician woman, in Mark vii. 28.) Here the picture is heightened by two touches. The dogs are there, and get the crumbs, which the man fails to get, and then they come and lick the open sores. The question has been raised whether this touch is meant to intensify the sufferings of the beggar, or to contrast the almost human sympathy of the brute with the brutal apathy of the man. In a European apologue the latter might, perhaps, be a legitimate explanation of the fact thus stated; but with the Eastern feelings, that see in the dog an unclean beast, the scavenger of the streets, we cannot doubt that the beggar would have shrunk from their licking, even assuming, which is doubtful, that it brought with it some relief from merely physical pain. It may be noted, too, that the word for "dogs" is not the diminutive form used in Matt. xv. 27, and Mark vii. 28 (where see Note), which implied tameness, but that which is always associated with the idea of abhorrence (Matt. vii. 6; Phil. iii. 2; 2 Pet. ii. 22; Rev. xxii. 15).

(22) **Was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.**—Of the three terms in common use among the Jews to express the future state of blessedness—(1) the Garden of Eden, or Paradise; (2) the Throne of Glory; (3) the bosom of Abraham—this was the most widely popular. It rested on the idea of a great feast, in which Abraham was the host. To lie in his bosom, as St. John in that of our Lord's (John xiii. 23), was to be there as the most favoured guest. And this was the position which was assigned to the beggar, obviously not merely as a compensation for the "evil things" he had endured on earth, but as the crown of the faith and patience with which he had borne them. The being "carried by angels" was literally in accord with the popular Jewish belief. Either good angels in general, or the special guardian angels of the righteous, took on them this office.

**The rich man also died, and was buried.**—As no mention is made of the burial of the beggar, it is obvious that there is something specially distinctive in the word. It had been, we may imagine, a stately burial, with hired mourners and all the pageantry of woe, such as within a few weeks, or even days, was to be the portion of the historic Lazarus of Bethany.

buried; (23) and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. (24) And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. (25) But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. (26) And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence. (27) Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: (28) for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. (29) Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. (30) And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. (31) And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

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(23) **And in hell.**—The Greek word is Hades, not Gehenna; the unseen world of the dead, not the final prison of the souls of the lost. (See Note on Matt. v. 22.) It lies almost on the surface of the parable that it describes an earlier stage of the life after death than that in Matt. xxv. 31—46. There is no mention here of the Advent of the Judge. As far as the parable itself is concerned, there is nothing to exclude the thought that the torments might have in part the character of a discipline as well as of retribution.

**In torments.**—The Greek word was applied originally to the test or touchstone of metals, then to the torture to which men had recourse as the one sure test of the veracity of witnesses, than to torments generally. The nature of the "torments" here is suggested by the "flame" of the next verse, but that word has to be taken with all its symbolic associations, and does not necessarily imply the material element of fire. (See Notes on Mark ix. 43—49.) What is meant is that there shall be for the soul of the evil-doer, when brought face to face with that holiness of God which is as a consuming fire (Heb. xii. 29), an anguish as intolerable as the touch of earthly flame is to the nerves of the mortal body. The thought is expressed with great beauty in Dr. Newman's *Dream of Gerontius*:—

> "And these two pains, so counter and so keen,—
> The longing for Him, when thou seest Him not;
> The shame of self at thought of seeing Him,—
> Will be thy veriest, sharpest purgatory."

**Seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.**—Here again we are in a region of symbolic imagery, under which we discern the truth that the souls of those who have yielded to selfish indulgence will discover after death that those whom they have scorned and neglected during their life are admitted, if worthy of admission, to the enjoyment of a rest and refreshment from which they themselves are, by their own act and deed, excluded.

(24) **Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger . . .**—The words, in their relation to the effect of the punishment on the rich man's character, offer two tenable explanations. On the one hand, they have been thought to indicate the old selfish arrogance and heartlessness of the man who still looks on Lazarus as one who may be sent hither and thither, at any cost of suffering, to do his bidding and minister to his ease; on the other, we may see in them the traces of pride conquered, and the cry for mercy at last coming from lips that had never uttered it before, and the craving for help and sympathy from one whom in his lifetime he had despised as beneath his notice. There is something terribly significant in the fact that it is the "tongue" that suffers most in that agonising flame. That was the organ of the sense which the man had pampered by his riotous and sumptuous living: that is now the chief instrument of retribution. The lesson is the same as that which a poet of our own has taught us—

> "The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
> Make instruments to scourge us."—
> Shakespeare, *King Lear*, v. 3.

(25) **But Abraham said, Son, . . .**—There is surely something suggestive that the Patriarch is represented as not disowning the relationship. If we find a meaning in the "friend" of the parables of the Labourers in the Vineyard (see Note on Matt. xx. 13) and the Wedding Garment (see Note on Matt. xxii. 12), we ought not to ignore the thought that seems to be implied here. Here, too, was one who, even in Hades, was recognised as being, now more truly than he had been in his life, a "child" or "son of Abraham." (Comp. chap. xix. 9.) The word used is the same, in its tone of pity and tenderness, as that which the father used to the elder son in the parable of the Prodigal Son (chap. xv. 31), which our Lord addressed to the man sick of the palsy (Matt. ix. 2), or to His own disciples (John xiii. 33).

**Remember.**—The word has a terrible force in its bearing upon the question of the future life. Memory intensified, reproducing the past visions, pleasures, and base joys, the *mala mentis gaudia* of the self-indulgent, and subject to the action of a conscience no longer narcotised into slumber—this makes the sharpest pang of the deserved anguish. In Christian eschatology the river of death is no water of Lethe, bringing with it the forgetfulness of past evil.

**Thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things.**—The verb, like "they *have* their reward," in Matt. vi. 2, implies that this was all he was to have. There is an emphasis, too, in the presence of the pronoun in the one clause, and its absence in the other. The rich man had made the pleasures of sense "*his* good things." They were all that he cared for—all, therefore, that he was to have. He had identified himself with them. The "evil things" of Lazarus, on the other hand, had not been chosen by him; they were external to him, a discipline and a probation through which, turning them to their right use, he passed to his true good.

**Now he is comforted.**—Some of the better MSS. give, "now he is comforted *here.*"

(26) **There is a great gulf fixed.**—Literally, a *chasm*, the opening or gaping of the earth. The scene brought before us is like one of the pictures of Dante's *Commedia*—steep rocks and a deep gorge, and on one side the flames that burn and do not consume, and on the other, the fair garden of Paradise and the kingly palace, and the banquet at which Abraham presides. And those that are bearing the penalty, or reaping the reward, of their life are within sight and hearing of each other, and hold conversation and debate. It is obvious that no single detail of such a description can be pressed as a literal representation of the unseen world. What was wanted for the purpose of the parable was the dramatic and pictorial vividness which impresses itself on the minds and hearts of men, and this could not otherwise be gained.

**So that they which would pass from hence . . .**—So far as we may draw any inference from such a detail as this, it suggests the thought that the blessed look with pity and compassion on those who are in the penal fires, and would fain help them if they could.

A.D. 33.

CHAPTER XVII.—(1) Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but

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*They that wish to pass* are spoken of in tones which present a striking contrast to the vindictive exultation that has sometimes shown itself in Christian writers, such, *e.g.*, as Tertullian (*de Spectac.* c. 30), and Milton (*Reformation in England, ad fin.*). A further lesson is, of course, implied, which strikes at the root of the specifically Romish theory of Purgatory and Indulgences—viz., that the wish is fruitless, that no interposition of the saints avails beyond the grave. The thought of their intercession that the discipline may do its appointed work is, indeed, not absolutely excluded, but that work must continue as long as God wills, *i.e.*, till it attains its end.

(27) **I pray thee therefore, father.**—The reiterated appeal to Abraham as "father" is suggestive in many ways: (1) as speaking out that in which too many of the rich man's class put an undue trust, resting on the fatherhood of Abraham rather than on that of God (Matt. iii. 9); (2) as showing that the refusal of the previous verse had been accepted, as it were, submissively. There is no rebellious defiance, no blasphemous execration, such as men have pictured to themselves as resounding ever more in the realms of darkness. Abraham is the sufferer's father still, and he yet counts on his sympathy.

(28) **For I have five brethren.**—Here again we are left to choose between opposite views of the motive which prompted the request. Was it simply a selfish fear of reproaches that might aggravate his sufferings? Was it the stirring in him of an unselfish anxiety for others, content to bear his own anguish if only his brothers might escape? Either view is tenable enough, but the latter harmonises more with the humility of the tone in which the request is uttered. The question why "five" are named is again one which we cannot answer with certainty. The allusions which some have found to the five senses, in the indulgence of which the man had passed his life, or to the five books of Moses (!), are simply fantastic. It may have been merely the use of a certain number for an uncertain, as in the case of the five wise and the five foolish virgins (Matt. xxv. 2), or the five talents (Matt. xxv. 15), or the five cities in the land of Egypt (Isa. xix. 18). It may have been an individualising feature, pointing to some conspicuously self-indulgent rich man among the hearers of the parable, and so coming home to him as a warning; or, possibly (following up the hint in the Note on verse 19), to the number of the Tetrarch's surviving brothers. Of these he had had eight, but Aristobulus and Archelaus were already dead, and possibly, of course, another. Here, returning to the structure of the parable, there is a special motive for the rich man's wishing Lazarus to be sent. The brothers had seen the beggar lying at his gate. If they were to see him now, as risen from the dead, they would learn how far more blessed his state had been than the luxurious ease in which they had passed and were still passing their lives.

(29) **They have Moses and the prophets.**—The words are in entire harmony with all the teaching of our Lord. The right use of lower knowledge is the condition of attaining to the higher, and without it signs and wonders avail but little: "He that hath, to him shall be given" (Mark iv. 25); "He that willeth to do the will of God," so far as he knows it, "shall know of the doctrine" which Christ came to proclaim, "whether it be of God" (John vii. 17). It was because the scribes and their followers were unfaithful in a little, that more was denied them. "Moses and the Prophets" were enough to teach them that a life of self-indulgent luxury was evil in itself, and therefore must bring with it, in the end, shame and condemnation. (Comp. Notes on John v. 45, 46.)

(30) **But if one went unto them from the dead.**—The words are in accordance with the general Jewish craving for a "sign," as the only proof of a revelation from God. (See Notes on Matt. xii. 33; xvi. 1; 1 Cor. i. 22.) The return of one who had passed into the unseen world and brought back a report of its realities would rouse, the rich man thought, the most apathetic. So far the picture is generic, but if we follow up the suggestion which has thrown light upon the parable before, we shall find here also a more individualising feature. It is specially recorded of the Tetrarch that he had hoped to see some miracle done by Jesus (chap. xxiii. 8). He had given utterance, when he heard of the miracles that had been actually wrought, to the belief that John the Baptist was "risen from the dead" (see Note on Matt. xiv. 2), and yet that belief had not brought him one step nearer to repentance.

(31) **If they hear not Moses and the prophets.**—We are accustomed, rightly enough, to look on our Lord's own Resurrection as leading to the great fulfilment of these words. We should not forget, however, that there was another fulfilment more immediately following on them. In a few weeks, or even days, according to the best harmonists, tidings came that Lazarus of Bethany was sick (John xi. 1). In yet a few days more that Lazarus did "rise from the dead;" cured, we may believe, of whatever love of this world's good things had checked his spiritual growth, a witness of the power of Christ to raise, as from the shadow-world of Hades, so also from the darkness of spiritual death to newness of life. And yet that wonder also brought about no repentance. Scribes and Pharisees, and Sadducees and priests simply took counsel together that they might put Lazarus also to death (John xii. 10). We can hardly believe the coincidence of name and fact in this instance to have been undesigned.

## XVII.

(1) **It is impossible but that offences will come.**—In this instance, the absence of any apparent connection might, perhaps, justify us in looking on the

that offences will come:[a] but woe *unto him*, through whom they come! (2) It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

(3) Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee,[b] rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. (4) And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him. (5) And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith. (6) And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed,[c] ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you. (7) But which of you, having a servant ploughing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he

a Matt. 18. 7.
b Matt. 18. 21.
c Matt. 17. 20.

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two precepts as having been noted by St. Luke for their own intrinsic value, without regard to the context in which they had been spoken. (See Notes on Matt. xviii. 7.) Even here, however, we must remember that there may have been what we have called "dropped links." It is not hard to see that the self-indulgent life, after the pattern of that of the rich man in the preceding parable, was an "offence" which, in one sense, must needs come, in the history of the Christian Church, as it had come in the Jewish, and yet would bring a woe on the man through whom it came.

(2) **It were better for him . . .**—See Note on Matt. xviii. 6, where the order of the two sayings is inverted. Assuming the words to have been repeated where we find them here, the "little ones" must mean the disciples of Christ who are, in both senses of the word "offended" by the worldliness of those who profess to be religious. They are made to stumble by the temptation to follow the bad example, or their faith in the reality of godliness is shaken by seeing that the form exists without the power.

(3) **Take heed to yourselves.**—The position of the words is remarkable, and they have nothing corresponding to them in the parallel passage in Matt. xviii. 21, where see Note. It is as though our Lord saw in the disciples the tendency to sit in judgment on the sins of others, on such sins especially as He had just condemned, and checked it by the words "take heed to yourselves." They were in danger of faults hardly less fatal to the spiritual life than selfish luxury, and one of those faults was the temper of hard and unforgiving judgment. When they saw a conspicuous instance of worldliness or other evil, they did as we so often do—they condemned, but did not "rebuke." In practice, as He taught them by example as by precept, open friendly reproof, aiming at restoration, is the truest path to the forgiveness with which, in the careless estimate of most men, it seems to be incompatible.

(4) **If he trespass against thee.**—Better, *if he sin.* The better MSS. omit the words, "against thee," and so make the command more general, and the verb is the same as that in Matt. xviii. 21, the teaching of which is here manifestly reproduced. The outward form seems at first to present a somewhat lower standard of forgiveness, "seven times," instead of "seventy times seven." Here, however, it should be remembered that we have "seven times a day," and the meaning is obviously the same in both passages. No accumulation of offences, however often repeated, is to be allowed to bring us to the hardness which refuses to forgive when the offender says that he repents and asks forgiveness.

(5) **The apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.**—The form in which the fragment that thus commences is brought before us suggests, as has been stated before (see Notes on chaps. vii. 13, x. 1), that it was a comparatively late addition to the collection of "the words of the Lord Jesus" (Acts xx. 35), and this is confirmed by the exceptional use of "the Apostles" for "the disciples." It may have stood originally in an absolutely isolated form. On the other hand, its position here indicates a sufficiently traceable sequence. That command of a seven-fold—*i.e.*, an unlimited—forgiveness seemed to make almost too great a strain on their faith. Did it not imply an almost miraculous victory over natural impulses, that could be wrought only by a supernatural grace? Was not the faith that could "remove mountains" wanted, if ever, here—a faith in the pardoning love of the Father, and in their own power to reproduce it? And so, conscious of their weakness, they came with the prayer that has so often come from the lips of yearning, yet weak, disciples of the Christ—reminding us of him who cried, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief" (see Note on Mark ix. 24)—"Increase our faith." May we not possibly think of Peter as having struggled to obey the rule which had been given to them before (Matt. xviii. 22), and as having found himself unequal to the task?

(6) **If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed.**—The words remind us, and must have reminded the disciples, of those of Matt. xvii. 20, which were called forth by the failure of the disciples to heal the demoniac boy after the Transfiguration. The "sycamine tree" (probably not the same as the "sycamore," but identified by most botanists with the mulberry tree, still cultivated on the slopes of the Lebanon and in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem and Nablous, both for its fruit and as supplying food for silkworms) takes the place of "this mountain," *sc.* Hermon, as an illustration of what true faith could do. If we suppose the conversation to have taken place near the Sea of Galilee, both features of the comparison gain a local vividness. It is remarkable that our Lord meets the prayer with what sounds like a reproof; and such a reproof, we must believe, was needed. The most elementary faith would have been enough to teach them (assuming the connection that has been traced above) that God is love, and that He would help them to overcome all hindrances to their love being after the pattern of His own. There was something, it may be, false in the ring of that prayer, an unreal diffidence asking for that as a gift which really comes only through active obedience and the experience which is gained through it.

(7) **But which of you, having a servant . . ?**—The words contain in reality, though not in form, an answer to their question. They had been asking for faith, not only in a measure sufficient for obedience, but as excluding all uncertainty and doubt. They were

is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? (8) And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? (9) Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. (10) So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

(11) And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. (12) And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: (13) and they lifted up *their* voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. (14) And when he saw *them*, he said unto them, Go shew

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looking for the crown of labour before their work was done, for the wreath of the conqueror before they had fought the battle. He presses home upon them the analogies of common human experience. The slave who had been "ploughing" or "feeding *sheep*" (the word is that always used of the shepherd's work, as in John xxi. 16, Acts xx. 28, 1 Pet. v. 2, and so both the participles are suggestive of latent parables of the spiritual work of the Apostles) is not all at once invited to sit down at the feast. He has first to minister to his master's wants, to see that his soul is satisfied, and then, in due course, his own turn will come. So, in the life of the disciples, outward ministerial labour was to be followed by personal devotion. In other words, the "increase of faith" for which the Apostles prayed, was to come through obedience, outward and inward obedience, to their Master's will. Faith was to show itself in virtue, and virtue would bring knowledge, and knowledge would strengthen faith. Comp. 2 Pet. i. 5, as showing that the lesson had been learnt.

(8) **Gird thyself, and serve me.**—Better, *minister to me.* The words receive a fresh significance if we connect them with chap. xii. 37, of which they are, as it were, the complement. There the Master promises that He will gird Himself, and minister to His disciples. Here He tells them that He too requires a service. They must give Him the meat and the drink of seeing that His Father's will is done on earth (John iv. 32, 34), and then they too shall be sharers in His joy. Yet another aspect of the same truths is found in the later promise of the Lord of the Churches to the servant who watches for His coming, "I will sup with him, and he with Me" (Rev. iii. 20).

(9) **Doth he thank that servant . . ?**—The words are spoken, of course, from the standpoint of the old relations between the master and the slave, not from that of those who recognise that master and slave are alike children of the same Father and servants of the same Master. In order to understand their bearing, we must remember how the subtle poison of self-righteousness was creeping in, even into the souls of the disciples, leading them to ask, "What shall we have therefore?" (Matt. xix. 19), and to ask for high places in His kingdom (Matt. xx. 21).

(10) **Say, We are unprofitable servants.**—There is something very suggestive in the use of the same word as that which meets us in the parable of the Talents (Matt. xxv. 30). God, we are taught, may recognise and reward the varying use which men make of gifts and opportunities. But all boasting is excluded; and in relation to God the man who has gained the ten talents has to own that he has nothing that he has not received, and to confess that he stands, as it were, on a level with the "unprofitable servant." Any personal claim on the ground of merit falls to the ground before such a declaration, and still more any speculative theory of works of supererogation, and of the transfer of the merits gained by them from one man to his fellow-servants and fellow-sinners.

(11) **And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem.**—This is the first distinct note of time in St. Luke's narrative since chap. ix. 51. It appears to coincide with the journey of which we read in Matt. xix. 1, Mark x. 1, and is the commencement of the last progress through the regions in which our Lord had already carried on His ministry. The fact, peculiar to St. Luke, that it led Him through Samaria, apparently through that part of it which lay on the borders of Galilee, is obviously reported in connection with the miracle that follows, the other Gospels dwelling on the departure from Galilee, and the continuance of the journey to Jerusalem by the route on the east of the Jordan valley.

(12) **Ten men that were lepers.**—On the general character of leprosy, see Notes on Matt. viii. 2. As only one of these was a Samaritan, it seems probable that the unnamed village was, as has been said, on the border-land of the two provinces. It is, perhaps, significant that our Lord takes neither of the usual caravan roads—one of which passed through Samaria, the other through Peræa—but chooses one for Himself that led through the one district into the other. The herding together of those who were shut out from all other fellowship has its parallel in the four lepers of 2 Kings vii. 3.

**Which stood afar off.**—In this case, then, there was no running and falling at the feet of Jesus, as in the earlier case of healing. They kept, it would seem probable, to the legal limit of one hundred paces.

(13) **Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.**—The Greek word for "Master" is again that which has been noticed as St. Luke's usual equivalent for "Rabbi." (See Note on chap. v. 5.) We may believe that the earlier instance of leprosy being cleansed (Matt. viii. 2), possibly many such instances (Matt. xi. 5), had in some way come to their knowledge.

(14) **Go shew yourselves unto the priests.**—On the meaning and object of this command, see Note on Matt. viii. 4. Here, however, it may be noted, there was no accompanying touch as the outward means and pledge of healing, and the command was therefore, in a greater degree than it had been before, a trial and test of faith. It did not necessarily imply a journey to Jerusalem. Any priest in any town was qualified for the function of inspecting and deciding on the completeness of the cure. Suddenly, or by degrees, as they went, the taint of blood disappeared, and their flesh became as it had been in the days of health.

yourselves unto the priests.[a] And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. (15) And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, (16) and fell down on *his* face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. (17) And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where *are* the nine? (18) There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. (19) And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

(20) And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:[1] (21) neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within

[a] Lev. 14. 2.

[1] Or, *with outward shew.*

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(15) **Turned back, and with a loud voice.**—The words imply that the work of healing was not accomplished till the company of lepers were at least out of sight.

(16) **And he was a Samaritan.**—As in the parable of the Good Samaritan, St. Luke's purpose in the selection of the incident falls in with what may be called the Catholicity of his Gospel, the breaking down of every middle wall of partition that divided the Jew from the other nations of the world. As the narrative is peculiar to his record, we may reasonably believe that it was one of the facts with which he became acquainted in the course of his personal inquiries in Galilee and Samaria. It is significant, in this case, that the barrier had been already broken down for a time by the common pressure of calamity, but no enduring sense of fellowship had as yet taken its place. The nine would seem to have separated themselves from the Samaritan as soon as they were cleansed. Men want more than the "misery" which our common proverb associates with "strange" companions, before they learn the lesson of brotherhood in its fulness.

(17) **Were there not ten cleansed?**—There is, it is clear, a tone of mingled surprise, and grief, and indignation, in the question thus asked. Looking to the facts of the case, an ethical question of some difficulty presents itself. If the nine had had faith to be healed—and the fact that they were healed implies it—how was it that faith did not show itself further in gratitude and love? The answer is to be found in the analogous phenomena of the spiritual life which are found at times in cases that are as the cleansing of the soul's leprosy. Men have the faith which justifies; they are pardoned, and they have the sense of freedom from the burden and the disease of sin, and yet their lives show no glow of loving gratitude. They shrink from fellowship with those who, having been sharers in the same blessing with themselves, are separated from them by outward lines of demarcation. We may, perhaps, think, without being over-bold, of the twelve disciples of the Baptist, who continued in their separatist life at Ephesus, without knowing the warmth and love and joy of the indwelling of the Spirit, as presenting such analogous phenomena. (See Notes on Acts xix. 1—7.) The history of most churches or smaller religious societies, perhaps also that of most individual men, presents many more.

(18) **Save this stranger.**—The word for "stranger" means literally, *a man of another race*, an *alien*. It is not found elsewhere in the New Testament, but is used in the LXX. of Isa. lvi. 3. It was probably a term of contempt in common use among the Jews. (Comp. the kindred word "aliens," with special reference to the Philistines, in Heb. xi. 34, and "one of another nation" in Acts x. 28.) It implied, as did the whole treatment of the Samaritans by the Jews, that the former were not recognised as being, in any sense, children of Abraham.

(19) **Thy faith hath made thee whole.**—The verb, elsewhere rendered, as in chap. vii. 50, "hath saved thee," is obviously used here so as to include both its higher and lower meanings. The nine had had sufficient faith for the restoration of the health of their body; his had gone further, and had given a new and purer life to his soul.

(20) **When he was demanded of the Pharisees.**—The question may have been asked in a different tone, by different classes of those who bore the common name of Pharisee. There were some who were really looking for the coming of the Messianic kingdom; there were some who altogether rejected the claim of Jesus of Nazareth to be the Christ. In the lips of the one set, the question implied a taunt; in those of the other, something like impatience. The terms of the answer contain that which met both cases.

**Cometh not with observation.**—The English noun exactly answers to the meaning of the Greek, as meaning careful and anxious watching. There was, perhaps, a special force in the word, as referring to the two forms of "watching" of which our Lord had been the object. Some of the Pharisees had "observed" Him once and again with a purpose more or less hostile. (Comp. chaps. vi. 7; xiv. 1; Mark iii. 2; where the Greek verb is that from which the noun here used is derived.) Others were looking for some sign from heaven, to show that He was the promised Head of the Kingdom. They are told that when it comes it will not be in conjunction with any such "observation" of outward things; it would burst upon them suddenly. In the meantime they must look for the signs of its presence in quite another region. The marginal reading, "outward shew"—that which is subject to observation—though giving an adequate meaning, is rather a paraphrase than a translation.

(21) **The kingdom of God is within you.**—The marginal reading, "among you," has been adopted, somewhat hastily, by most commentators. So taken, the words emphatically assert the actual presence of the Kingdom. It was already in the midst of them at the very time when they were asking when it would appear. The use of the Greek preposition is, however, all but decisive against this interpretation. It is employed for that which is "within," as contrasted with that which is "without," as in Matt. xxiii. 26, and in the LXX. version for the "inward parts," or spiritual nature of man, as contrasted with the outward, as in Pss. ciii. 1; cix. 22; Isa. xvi. 11. It was in that region, in the life which must be born again (John iii. 3), that men were to look for the kingdom; and there, whether they accepted it or rejected it, they would find sufficient tokens of its power.

you.[1] (22) And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see *it*. (23) And they shall say to you,[a] See here; or, see there: go not after *them*, nor follow *them*. (24) For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one *part* under heaven, shineth unto the other *part* under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day. (25) But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation. (26) And as it was in the days of Noe,[b] so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. (27) They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. (28) Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot;[c] they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; (29) but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all. (30) Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. (31) In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. (32) Remember Lot's wife.[d] (33) Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it;[e] and who-

[1] Or, *among you.*

[c] Gen. 19.

[a] Matt. 24. 23.

[b] Gen. 7. 11. 23.

[d] Gen. 19. 26.

[e] Matt. 16. 25.

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(22) **When ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man.**—The words express both the backward glance of regret, and the forward look of yearning expectation. The former feeling had been described before, when the disciples were told that the children of the bride-chamber should fast when the Bridegroom should be taken from them (chap. v. 34; Matt. ix. 15; Mark ii. 19). The latter was expressed by one of those who were now listening, when he spoke of men as "looking for and eagerly hasting" the coming of the day of God (2 Pet. iii. 12); by another, when he recorded the cry of the souls beneath the altar, "How long, O Lord?" (Rev. vi. 10). It is, we must remember, the disciples, and not the Pharisees, who are now addressed. In the long, weary years of conflict that lay before them, they would often wish that they could be back again in the pleasant days of friendly converse in the old Galilean life, or that they could be carried forward to the day of the final victory. Analogous emotions of both kinds have, of course, been felt by the successors of the disciples in all ages of the Church. They ask, Why the former days were better than the latter? (Eccles. vii. 10); they ask also, in half-murmuring impatience, "Why tarry the wheels of His chariots?" (Judg. v. 28); sometimes, even in the accents of unbelief, "Where is the promise of His coming?" (2 Pet. iii. 4).

(23) **See here; or, see there.**—See Note on Matt. xxiv. 23. The words are all but identical, but the difference in the context and the occasion should be noticed as another illustration of that reproduction of the same forms of thought and language to which attention has so often been called.

(24) **For as the lightning.**—See Note on Matt. xxiv. 27. There is, however, a noticeable variation in the form; the two "parts under heaven" taking the place of the "east" and the "west," and the "*day* of the Son of Man" taking the place of the more formal "coming," or *parousia*, which, as far as the Gospels are concerned, occurs only in St. Matthew. There is also, perhaps, more pictorial vividness in the two words, "lighteneth," "shineth," than in St. Matthew's "cometh out," and "appeareth," which is probably the right rendering of the word there translated "shineth." In any case, the words in St. Matthew are less vivid in their force.

(25) **But first must he suffer many things.**—See Notes on Matt. xvi. 21, xvii. 22. The interposition of this prophecy of the Passion in a discourse which bears primarily on the Second Advent is an individualising feature of this record of St. Luke's.

(26) **As it was in the days of Noe.**—See Notes on Matt. xxiv. 26, 27. Here, also, the "days" of the Son of Man take the place of the *parousia*.

(27) **They did eat, they drank.**—Better, as in St. Matthew, *they were eating and drinking, marrying, . . .*; the tense throughout being that which implies continuous and repeated action.

**The flood.**—The Greek word is always used in the New Testament for the deluge of Noah, that meaning having been stamped on it by the use of it in the LXX. version in Gen. vi. 17, vii. 6, 7, 10, 17.

(28) **Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot.**—The illustration does not occur in the otherwise parallel passage of Matt. xxiv. 26, 27, but was naturally suggested by our Lord's frequent reference to the Cities of the Plain (chap. x. 12; Matt. x. 15; xi. 23). The allusion to Lot in 2 Pet. ii. 7, may perhaps be traced to the impression made on the Apostle by this revival of the history.

**They bought, they sold.**—As in the preceding verse, the imperfect tense is used, *they were buying, they were selling.* There is a characteristic difference in the insertion of these verbs and the two which follow, as indicating a higher advance in social life than in the days of Noah.

(29) **It rained fire and brimstone.**—The combination of the two Greek words is found in the LXX. version of Gen. xix. 24, and obviously suggested the like combination here and in Rev. xiv. 10, xx. 13, xxi. 8.

(31) **He which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff.**—Better, *his goods*, as in Matt. xii. 29; Mark iii. 27. (See Notes on Matt. xxiv. 17, 18.)

(32) **Remember Lot's wife.**—The reference to this, as to the history of Lot generally, is peculiar to St. Luke, and speaks strongly for the independence of his Gospel. The account of Lot's wife had, however, already been used, or was used shortly afterwards (the date of the Wisdom of Solomon being an unsettled problem). to point a like moral, and the "standing pillar of salt" had become "a monument of an unbelieving soul" (Wisd. x. 7). She had looked back, as the disciples were told not to look, and the glance had been fatal (Gen. xix. 26).

(33) **Whosoever shall seek to save his life.**—The better MSS. give a word which is rendered else-

soever shall lose his life shall preserve it. (34) I tell you,[a] in that night there shall be two *men* in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. (35) Two *women* shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. (36) Two *men* shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.[1] (37) And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord?[b] And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body *is*, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

CHAPTER XVIII.—(1) And he spake a parable unto them *to this end*, that men ought always to pray,[c] and not to faint; (2) saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: (3) and there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. (4) And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; (5) yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. (6) And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

[a] Matt. 24. 40.

[c] 1 Thess. 5. 17.

[1] This 36th verse is wanting in most of the Greek copies.

[b] Matt. 24. 28.

A.D. 33.

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where by "purchase" (Acts xx. 28; 1 Tim. iii. 13), and perhaps always suggests, as the other word for "save" does not suggest, the idea of some transaction of the kind. So here, the man must purchase, as it were, his lower life at the price of the higher, and he will be a loser by the bargain.

**Shall preserve it.**—Here, again, the English verb is weak. Better, *shall give life to it.* The same Greek word occurs in the better MSS. of 1 Tim. vi. 13, and is there rendered by "quicken," and in its passive form in Acts vii. 49, where it should be translated *preserved alive*, and this is clearly the meaning here. The man who is content to risk his natural life shall gain a life of a higher spiritual order.

(34, 35) **Two men in one bed.**—See Notes on Matt. xxiv. 40, 41. The one to be "taken" is probably here, as there, the man who is rescued from destruction. Here there is a variation enough to prove independence, the "two in one bed" being prefixed to the examples given in St. Matthew as an instance of even closer companionship.

(37) **Where, Lord?**—The question comes in naturally here, where the future had been foreshadowed in parables and dark sayings. It would not have been natural in Matt. xxiv. 28, where the whole context determined the locality of which our Lord was speaking.

**Wheresoever the body is.**—See Note on Matt. xxiv. 28, the only variation being the use of "body" instead of "carcase." The repetition of the half-proverbial saying at a later period indicates its importance as a law of God's government. Men ask where His judgments fall, and the answer is that they fall wherever they are needed.

## XVIII.

(1) **That men ought always to pray, and not to faint.**—The latter of the two verbs is noticeable as being used in the New Testament by St. Luke and St. Paul only (2 Cor. iv. 1, 16; Gal. vi. 9; 2 Thess. iii. 13). The whole verse is remarkable as being one of the few instances (verse 9 being another) in which a parable is introduced by a distinct statement as to its drift and aim.

(2) **There was in a city a judge.**—The words have an interest historically, as testifying to the general disorganisation and corruption of justice which prevailed under the then government of Galilee and Peræa. Under the direct administration of the Roman Procurator, severe as his rule was, there was probably a better state of things.

The case put for the purpose of the parable was obviously an extreme one. Every motive that ordinarily leads men in office to act rightly was absent. Conscience was dead, and there was no love of approbation or fear of blame to supply its place.

(3) **There was a widow in that city.**—The neglect of the cause of the widow had always been noted by Lawgiver and Prophet—and it was one of the notes of a high ethical standard in both—as the extremest form of oppressive tyranny (Ex. xxii. 22; Deut. x. 18, xxvii. 19; Isa. i. 17, 23; Ezek. xxii. 7). Comp. also the speech of the widow of Tekoah (2 Sam. xiv. 2, 5).

**She came unto him.**—The tense implies continual coming.

**Avenge me of mine adversary.**—The term is used in its legal sense. She was plaintiff, and he defendant, or, it may be, *vice versâ.* The judge put off his decision, and the "law's delay" was worse to her than the original wrong had been.

(4) **He would not for a while.**—The judge was callous and dead to pity, even for that extremest wretchedness. The pleadings of the widow were simply an annoyance, which at first he bore with indifference.

**Though I fear not God, nor regard man.**—Here, also, there is a graphic touch of intensity. The man had passed beyond the stage of hypocrisy, conscious or unconscious, and saw himself even as others, even as God, saw him.

(5) **Lest by her continual coming she weary me.**—The latter verb is again one which takes its place in the vocabulary of unusual words common to St. Luke and St. Paul. It meets us in 1 Cor. ix. 27, and is there rendered "I *keep under* my body." Literally, however, it expresses the act of the pugilist when he strikes a blow which leaves a livid bruise on his opponent's face, and it would seem to have been transferred, in the natural transition of popular metaphor into the forms of colloquial language, from the arena to common life. So we talk of men "hitting hard" or "giving a knock-down blow" in controversy or debate. What is described here is the continuous shower of blows, each of which is short of a "knock-down," while their accumulative effect is, in the nearest equivalent of modern English, that the man is so "punished" that he is glad to give over at any price.

(6) **The unjust judge.**—Literally, *the judge of injustice*, as with the unjust steward in chap. xvi. 8, the usual adjective giving way to the stronger, more Hebraic idiom of the characterising genitive.

(7) And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? (8) I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

(9) And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous,[1] and despised others: (10) two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

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[1] Or, *as being righteous.*

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(7) **And shall not God avenge his own elect?**—There is at first something which jars on us in this choice of an extreme instance of human unrighteousness as a parable from which we are to learn the nature and the power of prayer. It is not as it was with the Unjust Steward, for there, according to the true interpretation of the parable, the unrighteous man stood for those who were relatively, at least, themselves unrighteous. It is a partial explanation that our Lord presses home upon the disciples an *à fortiori* argument. If reiterated entreaties prevail with men, whose character and wills are set against them, how much more with God, in whom character and will anticipate the prayer? Even so, however, we have the difficulty that the idea of prayer as prevailing, at last, through manifold repetitions, seems at variance with the teaching that condemns vain repetitions, on the ground that our Father knows our necessities before we ask Him. (See Note on Matt. vi. 7.) May we not think that here, as elsewhere, there is an intentional assumption by our Lord of a stand-point which was not His own, but that of those whom He sought to teach? Even His disciples were thinking of God, not as their Father, who loved them, but as a far-off King, who needed to be roused to action. They called on Him in their afflictions and persecutions, and their soul fainted within them, and they became weary of their prayers. Might not the parable be meant (1) to teach such as these that from their own point of view their wisdom was to persevere in prayer, and (2) to lead them to reconsider the ground from which they had started? And the one result would in such a case lead on almost necessarily to the other. Prayer has a marvellous self-purifying power, and the imperfect thoughts of God in which it may have had its beginning become clearer as it continues. It is one of the ever-recurring paradoxes of the spiritual life, that when we are most importunate we feel most strongly how little importunity is needed.

**Avenge his own elect.**—Literally, *work out His vengeance for*, the Greek noun having the article. The "vengeance" is not, however, that of retaliation such as human passions seek for, but primarily the "vindication" of God's elect, the assertion of their rights, and includes retribution upon others only so far as it is involved in this. (Comp. the use of the word in Rom. xii. 19; 2 Cor. vii. 11; Heb. x. 30.) This is the first occurrence of the word "elect" in St. Luke's Gospel, but it begins to be prominent about this time in our Lord's teaching. (See Notes on Matt. xx. 16; xxiv. 22.) The "elect" are the disciples who being "called" obey the "call" (Rom. viii. 30). The further question, What leads them to obey? is not here in view.

**Which cry day and night unto him.**—The words look to the coming trials and afflictions of the elect, which as yet the disciples knew not, or knew only in part. To see the world against them, and its rulers crushing them, to fight against overwhelming odds, this would tempt them to think that God was not with them, that He had deceived them. (Comp. the language of Jer. xx. 7.) In the prayer of the souls beneath the altar (Rev. vi. 10), we have an echo of the question. In St. Peter's insistence on the "long-suffering" of God (2 Pet. iii. 9), we have a proof that he had learnt the answer.

**Though he bear long with them.**—Literally, *bearing long with them.* The better MSS. give "and *bear long with them.*" The English, which suggests the thought that God bears with, *i.e.*, tolerates, His elect, is misleading. What is meant is, that He shows Himself *slow to anger* "*over them,*" *i.e.*, where they are concerned. They implore that "long-suffering" for themselves. They are tempted to murmur when it is extended to others.

(8) **When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith?**—The question implies, it is obvious, an answer in the negative. When St. Luke wrote his Gospel, men were witnessing a primary, though partial, fulfilment of the prophecy. Iniquity was abounding, and the love of many was waxing cold. And yet in one sense He was near, even at the doors (Jas. v. 8, 9), when men thought that the wheels of His chariot drove slowly. So has it been, and so will it be, in the great "days of the Lord" in the Church's history, which are preludes of the final Advent; so shall it be in that Advent itself.

(9) **Unto certain which trusted in themselves . . .**—Here, as above, the purpose of the parable is stated at the outset. It is, perhaps, open for us to think that isolated fragments of our Lord's teaching, treasured up here and there in the memory of disciples, and written down in answer to St. Luke's inquiries in the second stage of the growth of the Gospel records, would be likely to have such an introduction.

The "certain which trusted" are not specified as being actually Pharisees, and included, we may believe, disciples in whom the Pharisee temper was gaining the mastery, and who needed to be taught as by a *reductio ad absurdum*, what it naturally led to.

**Despised others.**—Literally, *the rest—viz.*, all others. The word for "despise," literally, *count as nothing*, is again one of those which St. Luke has, and the other Evangelists have not (that in Mark ix. 12 differs in form), but which is frequent in the vocabulary of St. Paul (Rom. xiv. 3, 10; 1 Cor. xvi. 11, *et al.*). This universal depreciation of others would seem almost an exaggeration, if experience did not show—*e.g.*, as in the history of Montanism and analogous forms of error—how easily men and women, religious societies and orders, drift into it, and how hard it is to set any limits to the monomania of egotism—above all, of religious egotism. It never uttered itself, perhaps, in a more repulsive form than when the Pharisees came to speak of the great mass of their brother-Israelites as the brute people, the "people of the earth."

(10) **Went up into the temple.**—The peculiar form of the verb, "went *up*," was strictly justified by the position of the Temple. It stood on what had been Mount Moriah, and rose high above the other buildings of the city.

**The one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.**—The two words would be more pictorially suggestive to

(11) The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men *are*, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. (12) I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. (13) And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto

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the disciples than they are, at first, to us. They would see the Pharisee with his broad blue *zizith*, or fringe, and the *Tephillin* (=prayers), or phylacteries, fastened conspicuously on brow and shoulder; the publican in his common working dress, with no outward badge to testify that he was a child of the Covenant. Here, as in the case of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son (where see Notes), the parable may have stated actual facts. Of one such publican we read not long afterwards. (See Note on chap. xix. 8.)

(11) **The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself.**—A false stress has often been laid on the Pharisee's attitude, as though his standing erect was in itself an indication of his self-righteous pride. But the publican also stood, and although another tense of the same verb is used, it is an over-subtle refinement to see this difference between the two forms. Standing was, indeed, with the Jews, the customary attitude of prayer. The self-same participle is used here of the Pharisee, and in chap. xix. 8 of Zacchæus. The order of the words in the Greek is "standing by (or, *with*) himself, prayed thus (or, *as follows*);" and it is a question of punctuation whether the words point to the Pharisee's standing "by himself," shrinking from contact with others, and so making himself the "observed of all observers," or, as in the Authorised version, that he "prayed with himself." The general use of the preposition is all but decisive in favour of the latter view. It does not follow, however, as has been somewhat hastily assumed, that the prayer was a silent one, that even he would not have dared to utter aloud such a boast as that which follows. There was nothing in the character of the typical Pharisee to lead him to any such sense of shame; and silent prayer, never customary among the Jews at any time, would have been at variance with every tradition of the Pharisees. (Comp. Notes on Matt. vi. 5, 7). So far as the phrase has any special point, it indicates that he was not praying to God at all; he was practically praying to himself, congratulating himself, half-consciously, that he had no need to pray, in the sense of asking for pardon, or peace, or righteousness, though it might be right, by way of example, to perform his acts of devotion and to thank God for what he had received. The words remind us —(1) of the title which Marcus Aurelius gave to his Stoic *Meditations*—"*Thoughts* (or better, perhaps, *communings*) *with himself*"—in which he, too, begins with thanksgiving and self-gratulations on the progress he had made in virtue from his youth onward (*Meditt.* i. 1); (2) of the more modern theory which recognises the value of prayer as raising the thoughts of man to a higher level, by a kind of self-mesmerising action, but excludes from it altogether the confession of sin, or the supplication for pardon, or the "making our wants known unto God" (Phil. iv. 6). The verb for "prayed" is in the tense which implies continuance. He was making a long address, of which this was a sample (chap. xx. 47).

**God, I thank thee . . .**—We cannot say that the formula, as a formula, was wrong. We are bound to thank God that we have been kept from sins. But all devout minds, and all rightly-constructed liturgies, have recognised the truth that confession must come first, and that without it thanksgiving is merely the utterance of a serene self-satisfaction in outward comforts, or, as here, of spiritual pride.

**That I am not as other men.**—Here, as before, *the rest of mankind.* This was the first false step. He did not compare his own imperfections with the infinite perfections of the Eternal, but with the imagined greater imperfections of his fellow-men, and so he stood as one who had gained the shore, and looked with pride, but not with pity, on those who were still struggling in the deep waters.

**Extortioners, unjust, adulterers, . . .**—The first word was aptly chosen, and was obviously suggested by the presence of the other supplicant. "Six publicans and half-a-dozen extortioners" had become a proverb; and the offensive epithet, if not meant to be heard by the publican, was, at any rate, mentally directed at him. In actual life, as our Lord teaches, there was a far worse, because a more hypocritical, "extortion" practised generally by the Pharisees themselves (Matt. xxiii. 25; Luke xi. 39). The other words are more generally put, but they were obviously spoken with side glances at this or that bystander. The language of Cromwell in dissolving the Long Parliament, saying to one "Thou art an adulterer," and to another "Thou art a drunkard and a glutton," to a third "and thou an extortioner," offers a curious instance of unconscious parallelism (Hume's *History of England*, chap. lx.).

**Or even as this publican.**—This was the climax of all. He saw the man smiting on his breast in anguish, and no touch of pity, no desire to say a word of comfort, rises in his soul. The penitent is only a foil to the lustre of his own virtues, and gives the zest of contrast to his own insatiable vanity. The very pronoun has the ring of scorn in it.

(12) **I fast twice in the week.**—From the negative side of his self-analysis the Pharisee passes to the positive. The Stoic Emperor is a little less systematic, or rather groups his thanksgiving after a different plan, and, it must be owned, with a higher ethical standard. On the fasts of the Pharisees on the third and fifth days of the week, see Note on Matt. vi. 16.

**I give tithes of all that I possess.**—Better, *of all that I acquire,* as in Matt. x. 9; Acts i. 18. Tithe was a tax on produce, not on property. The boast of the Pharisee is, that he paid the lesser tithes, as well as the greater—of mint, anise, and cummin (Matt. xxiii. 23), as well as of corn and wine and oil. There is something obviously intended to be significant in the man's selection of the good deeds on which he plumes himself. He does not think, as Job did in his boasting mood, that he had been "a father to the poor," and had "made the widow's heart to sing for joy" (Job xxix. 13, 16), nor look back, as Nehemiah looked, upon good deeds done for his country (Neh. xiii. 14, 22, 31) in the work of reformation. For him fasting and tithes have come to supersede the "weightier matters of the Law" (Matt. xxiii. 23).

(13) **The publican, standing afar off.**—The words point to a sense of shame which kept the publican away from the crowd of worshippers who pressed forward to the ark-end of the outer court of the Temple—away, above all, from the devout and respectable Pharisee. So might some "forlorn and desperate

heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. (14) I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other; for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased;[a] and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

(15) And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when *his* disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them. (16) But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. (17) Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

(18) And a certain ruler asked him,[b] saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? (19) And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none *is* good, save one, *that is*, God. (20) Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother. (21) And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up. (22) Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing:

[a] Matt. 23. 12.

[b] Matt. 19. 16.

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castaway" crouch, at some solemn service, in the remote corner of the nave of a cathedral. He, too, stood, for that was the received attitude of prayer, and kneeling, at such a time and in that place, would have been ostentatious.

**Would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven.**—There is a subtle delineation of what one may call the physiognomy of repentance, which should not pass unnoticed. The downcast look stands in contrast with the supercilious expression (taking the adjective in its most literal sense) of the Pharisee.

**But smote upon his breast.**—The same act meets us as the expression of extremest sorrow in those who stood by the cross (chap. xxiii. 48). Looked at physiologically, it seems to imply a tension of the vessels of the heart, such as we all feel in deep emotion, to which outward impact seems, in some measure, to minister relief. So men strike their chest, when suffering from cold, to quicken the circulation of the blood. As being spontaneous and involuntary, it attested the reality of the emotion, and contrasted with the calm, fixed attitude of the Pharisee.

**God be merciful to me a sinner.**—Literally, *to me the sinner*, as though, like St. Paul, he singled out his own guilt as exceptional, and thought of himself as "the chief of sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15).

(14) **This man went down to his house, justified rather than the other.**—The Greek participle is in the perfect, implying a completed and abiding justification. There is something suggestive in the fact that the "house" is made the test in each case. Home-life is the test of the reality and acceptableness of our worship. The Pharisee, in spite of his self-gratulation, betrayed a conscience ill at ease by irritability, harshness, sitting in judgment upon others. The publican, not in spite of his self-condemnation, but by reason of it, went home with a new sense of peace, showing itself in a new gentleness and cheerfulness.

**For every one that exalteth himself.**—Comp. Note on chap. xiv. 11. What had there been said, in its bearing on man's outward life, and as shown by the judgment of men, is here transferred, the law remaining the same, to the higher regions of the spiritual life and to God's judgment. In both cases there is a needless variation in the English version, the Greek giving the same verb for both "abased" and "humbleth."

The lessons of the parable force themselves upon every reader. The spirit of religious egotism, however, is not easily exorcised, and we need, perhaps, to be reminded that the temper of the Pharisee may learn to veil itself in the language of the publican, men confessing that they are "miserable sinners," and resting, with a secret self-satisfaction in the confession; or that, conversely, the publican—*i.e.*, the openly non-religious man—may cease to smite upon his breast, and may come to give God thanks that he is not as the Pharisee.

(15—17) **And they brought unto him also infants.**—See Notes on Matt. xix. 13—15; Mark x. 13—16. St. Luke, for some reason or other (possibly because he had recorded like teaching in chap. xvi. 18), omits the previous teaching as to divorce. The use of the specific word for "infants" is peculiar to him. The use of the word in chaps. i. 41, 44, ii. 12, 16, where it is rendered "babe," shows that it includes the very earliest stage of childhood, and so is not without its importance in its bearing on the question of infant baptism, so far as that question is affected by this narrative.

(16) **Suffer little children to come unto me.**—The close agreement with St. Mark in this and the following verse, makes it probable that this is one of the passages which St. Luke derived from personal communication with him. (See *Introduction.*)

(18—23) **And a certain ruler asked him, . . .**—See Notes on Matt. xix. 16—25; Mark x. 17—22. St. Luke alone describes the inquirer as a "ruler." As used without any defining genitive, and interpreted by chap. xxiii. 13, 35, John iii. 1, vii. 26, 48, *et al.*, it seems to imply that he was a member of the Council or *Sanhedrin.* The term "youth," in Matt. xix. 20, is not at variance with this inference. It is defined by Philo as including the period between twenty-one and twenty-eight—an age at which a place in the Council was probably open to one who was commended both by his wealth and his devotion. St. Paul obviously occupied a position of great influence at a time when he is described as a "young man" (Acts vii. 58).

(19) **Why callest thou me good?**—The agreement with St. Mark is again closer than with St. Matthew.

(20) **Thou knowest the commandments.**—St. Luke here agrees with St. Matthew in omitting the "defraud not," which we find in St. Mark.

(21) **From my youth up.**—The detail may be noted as a point in common with St. Mark, as also is the omission of the question, "What lack I yet?" given in St. Matthew.

(22) **Yet lackest thou one thing.**—It may be noted that the words almost imply the previous question, which has just been referred to.

**And come, follow me.**—St. Luke, with St. Matthew, omits the "taking up thy cross," which is found in many, but not all, MSS. of St. Mark.

sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. (23) And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich. (24) And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! (25) For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. (26) And they that heard *it* said, Who then can be saved? (27) And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God. (28) Then Peter said,[a] Lo, we have left all, and followed thee. (29) And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, (30) who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

(31) Then he took *unto him* the twelve,[b] and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. (32) For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: (33) and they shall scourge *him*, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again. (34) And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

(35) And it came to pass,[c] that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain

[b] Matt. 20. 17.

[a] Matt. 19. 27.

[c] Matt. 20. 29.

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(23) **He was very sorrowful.**—St. Luke's word stands half-way between St. Matthew's "sorrowing" and St. Mark's vivid "lowering" or "frowning." (See Note on Mark x. 22.)

**He was very rich.**—St. Luke's equivalent for *he had great possessions.* There is, perhaps, something suggestive, especially on the view which has been taken as to the identity of the young ruler, and the purport of the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, in the use of the very same adjective as had been employed in that parable.

(24—27) **When Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful.**—See Notes on Matt. xxx. 23—26; Mark x. 23—27. The better MSS. give simply, "When Jesus saw him, He said . . ."

**How hardly shall they that have riches . . .**—Another verbal agreement with St. Mark.

(25) **Through a needle's eye.**—The Greek word for "needle" in the better MSS. differs from that in St. Matthew and St. Mark, and is a more classical word. That which the others use was unknown to Attic writers. The fact, small as it is, takes its place among the signs of St. Luke's culture.

(26) **And they that heard it.**—St. Luke's way of putting the fact suggests the thought either that others may have been present besides the disciples who are named in the other Gospels, or that only some of the disciples heard what had been said.

(27) **The things which are impossible with men.**—The answer is substantially the same as we find in the other Gospels, but it assumes in St. Luke something more of the form of a generalised axiom.

(28—30) **Then Peter said, . . .**—See Notes on Matt. xix. 27—30; Mark x. 28. The better MSS. have, "We have left our own (possessions)." "All" was probably substituted from a recollection of the words as found in the other reports.

(29) **There is no man that hath left . . .**—There is possibly something characteristic in the omission of the "lands," which we find in the other Gospels. To leave a "house" implied the breaking-up of the life of home and its relationships, but the companion of Paul and Barnabas might well have thought so little of parting with a "field," as a simple possession (comp. Acts i. 18, 19; iv. 34), that the word hardly dwelt upon his memory as connected with the idea of a special and extraordinary sacrifice.

**For the kingdom of God's sake.**—Note the freedom of reporting in the substitution of this phrase in the place of "for My name's sake," in St. Matthew, and "for My sake and the gospel's" in St. Mark.

(30) **Who shall not receive manifold more.**—Note, as again, perhaps, characteristic, the omission of the essentially Jewish image of the "sitting on twelve thrones" in St. Matthew, of the clause "with persecutions," in St. Mark, and of the words, "Many that are first shall be last . . ." which we find in both.

(31—34) **Then he took unto him the twelve.**—See Notes on Matt. xx. 17—19; Mark x. 32—34. St. Luke, like St. Mark, passes over the parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard. The insertion of the reference to the prophecies of the Passion is, on the other hand, peculiar to him, and is, perhaps, connected with the prominence given to those prophecies in chap. xxiv. 27, 44, 45.

(32) **He shall be delivered unto the Gentiles.**—The words are nearly the same as in the other Gospels, but the "spitefully entreated" is peculiar to St. Luke.

(34) **They understood none of these things.**—The whole verse is peculiar to St. Luke, and reproduces what had been said before in chap. ix. 45, where see Note. It is as though his professional habit of analysis led him to dwell on these psychological phenomena as explaining the subsequent bewilderment of the disciples, and their slowness to believe that their Lord had risen from the dead (chap. xxiv. 11, 21, 25, 38). They heard the words, but, as we say, did not "take in" their meaning. For a like analysis, see Note on chap. xxii. 45.

**This saying was hid from them.**—The verb so rendered occurs here only in the New Testament. Its precise meaning is "covered" or "veiled," rather than hidden. Some such thought of dimmed perception was in St. Paul's mind when he said of the unbelieving Jews that, as they heard the Law and the Prophets, "the veil was upon their hearts" (2 Cor. iii. 15).

(35) **As he was come nigh unto Jericho.**—Better, *as He was coming nigh.* See Notes on

blind man sat by the way side begging: (36) and hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. (37) And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. (38) And he cried, saying, Jesus *thou* son of David, have mercy on me. (39) And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, *Thou* son of David, have mercy on me. (40) And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him, (41) saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. (42) And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. (43) And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise unto God.

A.D. 33.

CHAPTER XIX.—(1) And *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho. (2) And, behold, *there was* a man named Zacchæus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. (3) And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. (4) And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycomore tree to

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Matt. xx. 29—34; Mark x. 46—52. St. Luke, for some reason, passes over the ambitious request of the sons of Zebedee. He agrees with St. Mark, and not with St. Matthew, as to there being *one* blind man, and as to the miracle being wrought on the approach to Jericho, not on the departure from it.

(36) **Hearing the multitude pass by.**—Better, *a multitude*, the Greek having no article, and its absence better expressing the vague impression left on the blind man by the sound of many footsteps and voices.

(39) **They which went before**—*viz.*, those who were in advance of Jesus; probably, if we suppose Mark x. 32 to represent the usual order, not the disciples, but a portion of the crowd. On "the Son of David," see Note on Matt. ix. 27.

(41) **Lord, that I may receive my sight.**—As St. Luke uses "Lord" (*kyrie*) for St. Mark's "Rabboni," it may be inferred that he uses it in a somewhat higher sense than either of his two words for Master. (See Notes on chap. v. 5, viii. 24.)

(42) **Thy faith hath saved thee.**—Better, as in St. Mark, *Thy faith hath made thee whole*, the immediate reference being obviously to the restoration of the man's sight, and that which was in the immediate future being recognised as already ideally completed. Beyond this, as in the use of the same formula in chap. vii. 50, there lies in the word a reference to the salvation, the healthiness of spiritual vision, of which the restoration of bodily sight was at once the type and the earnest.

(43) **Glorifying God.**—The account of the effect of the miracle on the blind man himself, and on the people, is peculiar to St. Luke, and seems to belong to the class of phenomena which he loved to study (chaps. v. 25, 26; vii. 16; Acts iii. 8; xiv. 10, 11).

## XIX.

(1) **And passed through Jericho.**—Better, *and was passing through.* The narrative that follows is peculiar to this Gospel.

(2) **There was a man named Zacchæus, . . .**—The name appears in the Old Testament in the form Zaccai (Ezra ii. 9; Neh. vii. 14), and meant "pure" or "innocent." Rabbinic writers mention a Zacchæus as living at Jericho about this time, the father of a famous Rabbi, Jochanan or John.

**The chief among the publicans.**—The position of Jericho near the fords of the Jordan made it a natural trade-centre for the imports from the Gilead country—myrrh and balsam. Under the government of Herod and Archelaus it had become once more a city of palm-trees (Judg. i. 16), and their dates and palm-honey were probably liable to an *octroi* duty. The "farming" system adopted in the Roman revenue probably gave Zacchæus the *status* of a middle-man or sub-contractor between the great capitalists of the equestrian order at Rome, the real *publicani*, and the "publicans" commonly so called, who were the actual collectors. As such he had as abundant opportunities for enriching himself as a Turkish pacha, and, as we may infer from his own words, had probably not altogether escaped the temptations of his calling.

(3) **He sought.**—Better, *was seeking.* The verb expresses vividly the oft-repeated attempts of the man, little of stature, to get a glimpse of the Prophet as He passed.

**For the press.**—The word is the same as that elsewhere rendered "multitude" or "crowd." The motive is left to be inferred. It was not mere curiosity, for that would not have met with the Lord's warm approval. Had he heard that there was a publican like himself among the chosen disciples of the Teacher whom the people were receiving as the Son of David? Had some one told him of the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican? Had the fame of the miracle wrought on the entrance into Jericho made him eager to see the Worker?

**He was little of stature.**—The individualising feature may be accepted, in connection with what follows, either as a touch of consummate art, or a note of artless truthfulness.

(4) **And climbed up into a sycomore tree.**—The name of "sycomore" has been variously applied—(1) to a species of maple (*Acer pseudo-platanus*); (2) to the mulberry (*Morus nigra*), more properly, "sycamine," as in chap. xvii. 6; and (3) to the fig mulberry (*Ficus sycomorus*). The last is the tree here meant. It grew to a considerable height in the Jordan valley, and was much used by builders and carpenters (1 Kings x. 27). The care taken by St. Luke to distinguish between the "sycamine" of chap. xvii. 6 (where see Note), and the "sycomore" here, may fairly be noted as an instance of botanical accuracy, such as was likely to be found in a physician. We can picture the scene to our mind's eye—the eager, wistful, supplicating face looking down from the fresh green foliage (it was early spring), and meeting the gaze of Jesus as He passed.

see him: for he was to pass that *way.*
(5) And when Jesus came to the place,
he looked up, and saw him, and said
unto him, Zacchæus, make haste, and
come down; for to day I must abide at
thy house. (6) And he made haste, and
came down, and received him joyfully.
(7) And when they saw *it*, they all murmured,
saying, That he was gone to be
guest with a man that is a sinner.
(8) And Zacchæus stood, and said unto
the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my
goods I give to the poor; and if I have
taken any thing from any man by false
accusation, I restore *him* fourfold.
(9) And Jesus said unto him, This day is
salvation come to this house, forsomuch
as he also is a son of Abraham. (10) For
the Son of man is come to seek and to
save that which was lost.[a]

[a] Matt. 18. 11.

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(5) **To day I must abide at thy house.**—The words gain a fresh significance, if we remember that Jericho was at this time one of the chosen cities of the priests. (See Note on chap. x. 30.) Our Lord passed over their houses, and those of the Pharisees, in order to pass the night in the house of the publican. There, we may believe, He saw an opening for a spiritual work which He did not find elsewhere.

(6) **Received him joyfully.**—The joy is significant as implying previous yearning, a desire for communion with the new Teacher, the wish to sit at His feet and drink in the words of eternal life.

(7) **They all murmured.**—Better, *were all murmuring.* It is significant that the murmur was not confined to a special section of rigorous Pharisees, but came from the whole crowd. The chief publican was clearly not popular, and probably the priestly tone of the place (see Note on verse 5) gave additional strength to all caste feelings. We are carried forward in this verse from the promise to the performance. Our Lord was in the house when the murmurs found expression.

**With a man that is a sinner.**—The term was obviously used from the popular Pharisaic stand-point, as attaching necessarily to the calling of Zacchæus. He had placed Himself on a level with the heathen or the vilest Jew, and ought to be treated accordingly.

(8) **Zacchæus stood, and said unto the Lord . . .**—The word for "stood" is the same as that used in the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican (chap. xviii. 11). Too much stress has, perhaps, been laid on its supposed force as indicating self-assertion in both cases. It does not seem to imply more than that Zacchæus, in his own house, hearing the murmurs of those who looked in at doors or windows, rose from his couch, and stood up, and in the hearing of all, said what follows. The phrase, "unto the Lord," indicates, as elsewhere, that the facts were recorded by St. Luke at a comparatively late period. (See Note on chap. vii. 11.)

**The half of my goods I give . .**—It seems more natural to see in this the statement of a new purpose than that of an habitual practice. In the absence of any words implying a command of this nature, we must assume either that it was a spontaneous impulse of large-hearted devotion, or, possibly, that Zacchæus had heard of the command given but a few days before to the young ruler (chap. xviii. 22). The promise implies immediate distribution. The compensation for wrongs that men might have suffered at his hands was to come out of the remaining half.

**If I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation.**—The seven words of the English text are all needed to express the one Greek word, the same as that in chap. iii. 14, where see Note. It is a pity that English usage, and the modern meaning of the words, do not allow us to say, "If I have *sycophanted* any man." Conscience probably reproached Zacchæus with not a few of such acts of spoliation in the past. The Greek phrase, "If I have taken anything," hardly implies doubt as to the fact, and is used like our English "wherever."

**I restore him fourfold.**—Here, also, it seems best to recognise in the words a new purpose. He is ready to compensate now for whatever wrong had been done before. There seems, indeed, something almost ludicrously incongruous in a devout man boasting that his rule of life is to make amends to those whom he deliberately cheats, and the special force of the verb practically excludes the idea of involuntary wrong.

The Law required in cases of voluntary restitution the addition of one-fifth of the value of the thing restored (Lev. vi. 5; Num. v. 6, 7).

The whole force of the history seems lost if we suppose Zacchæus, as some have done, to have been a model of a virtuous publican before he sought to see Jesus. On that supposition his words are like those of the Pharisee in the parable, a self-righteous boast. The strivings of repentance must, indeed, have begun before, and the man, when he welcomed our Lord's presence, and trusted His words, was "justified by faith." Is it too utterly bold a conjecture that He who saw Nathanael under the fig-tree (John i. 48), had seen Zacchæus in the Temple, and that the figure in the parable of chap. xviii. 14, was in fact a portrait?

(9) **This day is salvation come to this house.**—The Greek tense, *This day came there salvation to this house,* has a force which it is not easy to express in English, implying that the salvation was already looked back upon as completed in the past. In one sense salvation had come in the personal presence of the Saviour, but we must remember all that the word implied—deliverance, not from the penalty only, but from the habit and the power of sin. This had come, and the words and acts of Zacchæus showed the fruits. And it comes to him because "he also is a child of Abraham." The Abraham character was in him, as that of the true Israel was in Nicodemus (John i. 47). A son of Abraham, like him in his noble generosity (comp. Gen. xiii. 9; xiv. 23), was found where, to the common observer, it would have seemed as hopeless to look for one as among the stones of the Jordan valley (Matt. iii. 9).

(10) **The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.**—Like words had been spoken once before, under circumstances that presented a very striking contrast to those now before us. Then the loving purpose of the Christ had for its object the "little child," as yet untouched by the world's offences (Matt. xviii. 2, 11): now it rested on the publican, whose manhood had been marred by them. The same law of work is reproduced in a more emphatic form. There it had been that He "came to save:" here it is that He came to "seek" as well.

(11) And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. (12) He said therefore,[a] A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. (13) And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds,[1] and said unto them, Occupy till I come. (14) But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this *man* to reign over us. (15) And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. (16) Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. (17) And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have

[a] Matt. 25. 14.

[1] *Mina*, here translated a pound, is twelve ounces and an half: which according to five shillings the ounce is three pounds two shillings and sixpence.

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(11) **He added and spake a parable.**—As in chap. xviii. 1, 9, so here, it is characteristic of St. Luke that he states, more fully than is common in the other Gospels, the occasion and the purpose of the parable which follows. The verse throws light upon all the history that follows. In all previous visits to Jerusalem our Lord had gone up either alone or accompanied only by His chosen disciples. Now He was followed by a crowd, gathering strength as they journeyed on, and roused, by their very nearness to the Holy City, to an almost uncontrollable excitement. The time for delay, they thought, had come to an end. He was about to claim the throne of His father David. The Kingdom of God would "immediately appear." The parable shows us, and was, in part, meant to teach them, how the Master regarded the dreams of the disciples.

**Should immediately appear.**—Better, perhaps, *should be shown forth*, or *manifested*. The Greek word is not used by any other New Testament writer. It is clear, from the tenor of the parable, that disciples and multitude were alike dwelling on the greatness to which they were to attain, on the high places in store for them on the right hand and on the left, rather than on their work and their duties in relation to that Kingdom of God.

(12) **A certain nobleman went into a far country.**—See Notes on Matt. xxv. 14—30, with which the parable that follows has many obvious points of resemblance. There are, however, many noticeable differences in detail. At the outset we have the new feature of the nobleman going "into a far country to receive a kingdom." This had an obvious starting-point in the recent history of Judæa. Both the Tetrarch Antipas and Archelaus, on the death of their father, had gone to Rome to submit their claims to the kingdom to the decision of Augustus (Jos. *Ant.* xvii. 9, §§ 3, 4). The Greek for "nobleman" is not the same as in John iv. 46, where the word means a "king's officer." Here it is simply a "man of noble family." In the interpretation of the parable we may see a prophetic announcement by our Lord of His own departure to the "far country," that lay behind the veil, to receive His Kingdom, and of His subsequent return.

(13) **And delivered them ten pounds.**—In this, again, we have a noticeable difference. Here we begin with equality; in Matt. xxv. 15 the servants start with unequal amounts, "according to their several ability." So far as we lay stress on the difference, it implies that the trust in this case is that which all disciples of Christ have in common—*viz.*, their knowledge of the truth and their membership in the Kingdom, and not the offices and positions that vary in degree. The *pound*, or *mna*, was, in Greek numismatics, not a coin, but a sum equal to the sixtieth part of a talent. The Greek name was probably derived from the Hebrew *Maneh*. According to another estimate it was equal to 25 shekels, or 100 *drachmæ* or *denarii*. The word meets us, as far as the New Testament is concerned, in this parable only.

**Occupy till I come.**—The better MSS. give, "while I am coming." The Greek verb for "occupy" occurs in this passage only in the New Testament. A compound form of it is rendered, in verse 15, by "gained in trading." The English verb meets us in Ezek. xxvii. 9, 16, 21, 22, in the sense of "trading," in which it is used here. (See also the Prayer Book version of Ps. cvii. 23.)

(14) **But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him.**—Here, also, recent history supplied a feature in the parable. This was precisely what the Jews had done in the case of Archelaus, both at the time referred to in the Note on verse 12, and later on, when their complaints were brought before the Emperor, and led to his deposition and banishment to Gaul. That which answers to it in the inner meaning of the parable is the unwillingness of the Jews—or, taking a wider view of the interpretation, of mankind at large—to accept the law of Christ or acknowledge His sovereignty.

(15) **It came to pass, that when he was returned.**—See Note on Matt. xxv. 19. The absence of the words "after a long time" is noticeable, and suggests the thought that our Lord may have added them in the later form of the parable as a further safeguard against the prevalent expectations of the immediate coming of the Kingdom, and, we may add, against the thought which sprang up afterwards in men's minds, that there was no kingdom to be received, and that the King would never return. (Comp. 2 Pet. iii. 4.)

**Had gained by trading.**—The Greek verb is a compound form of that translated "occupy" in verse 13.

(16) **Thy pound hath gained ten pounds.**—The increase is on a larger scale than in the parable in Matt. xxv. There each of the faithful servants gains as much again as he had received. Here the gain is tenfold (1,000 per cent.). Adopting the view which has been taken of the distinctive ideas of the two parables, it may be said that what is suggested is the almost boundless opening for good acquired by the simple acceptance of the truth, apart from the opportunities offered by special gifts and functions. So interpreted, the several grades of increase correspond to the thirty, sixty, and hundredfold in the parable of the Sower. (See Note on Matt. xiii. 23.)

(17) **Because thou hast been faithful in a very little.**—More literally, *because thou didst become*

thou authority over ten cities. (18) And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. (19) And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities. (20) And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: (21) for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. (22) And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: (23) wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? (24) And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give *it* to him that hath ten pounds. (25) (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.) (26) For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given;[a] and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. (27) But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before me.

(28) And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem. (29) And it came to pass,[b] when he was

[a] Matt. 13. 12.

[b] Matt. 21. 1.

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*faithful.* The words are in their substance like those in St. Matthew, but their absolute identity with those in the lesson drawn from the parable of the Unjust Steward (see Note on chap. xvi. 10) is every way suggestive. This parable is connected with that as its natural sequel and development.

**Have thou authority over ten cities.**—The truth implied in Matt. xxv. 21 (where see Note), that the reward of faithfulness in this life, and probably in the life to come, will be found in yet wider opportunities for work in God's service, is stated here with greater distinctness. "Authority over ten cities" must have something corresponding to it, some energy and work of guidance, in the realities of the unseen world, and cannot simply be understood as fulfilled in the beatific vision or the life of ceaseless praise and adoration.

(20) **Thy pound, which I have kept . . .**—Literally, *which I kept—i.e.*, all along. He had never made any effort at doing more.

**Laid up in a napkin.**—The smaller scale of the parable is shown in the contrast between this and the "hiding the talent in the earth," in St. Matthew. The "napkin" (the Greek word is really Latin, *sudarium*) appears in Acts xix. 12 as "handkerchiefs." Such articles were naturally, then as now, used for wrapping up and concealing money which the owner wished simply to hoard.

(21) **I feared thee, because thou art an austere man.**—The Greek adjective (from which the English is derived) is not used elsewhere in the New Testament. Literally, it means *dry*, and so, hard and stiff. In 2 Macc. xiv. 30 it is translated "churlish." On the plea of the wicked servant, see Note on Matt. xxv. 22.

(22) **Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee.**—See Note on Matt. xxv. 26. These words are, perhaps, somewhat more emphatic than in the parallel passage. The very term which the servant had dared to apply to his lord, is repeated with a solemn impressiveness.

(23) **Into the bank.**—Literally, the *table*, or *counter*. The Greek substantive is the root of the word translated "exchangers" in Matt. xxv. 27 (where see Note).

**That at my coming I might have required . .**—Literally, *And when I came I should have got it with interest.*

**Usury.**—The word is used (as in Matt. xxv. 27) in its older meaning, as including interest of any kind, and not exclusively that which we call usurious.

(25) **And they said unto him, Lord . . .**—The touch of wonder, perhaps of indignation, is peculiar to St. Luke. It can scarcely be thought of as simply an element of dramatic vividness. It foreshadows the feelings with which men have in all ages looked on those greater than themselves. They grudge the influence and opportunities for good which are transferred from those who have not used them to those that will. May we not think of some such feeling as working among those members of the Church of the Circumcision, who did not hold out to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship (Gal. ii. 9)? When Galatia received the gospel from one who had already planted churches far and wide, St. Luke may well have seen in it an illustration of the pound taken from the slothful servant and given to him that had ten.

(26) **Unto every one which hath shall be given.**—This again takes its place among the oft-repeated axioms of our Lord's teaching. It meets us after the parable of the Sower (chap. viii. 18; Matt. xiii. 12; Mark iv. 25), in that of the Talents (Matt. xxv. 29), and here. (See Notes on the several passages.)

(27) **But those mine enemies.**—This feature of the parable is peculiar to St. Luke's report. Like the earlier portions of the outer framework of the story, it had an historical groundwork in the conduct of Archelaus on his return from Rome (Jos. *Wars*, ii. 7, § 3). Spiritually, it represents, in bold figures drawn from the acts of tyrant kings, the ultimate victory of the Christ over the unbelieving and rebellious. (Comp. 1 Cor. xv. 25.) They who will not have Him to reign over them will learn that He does reign, and having shut Love out, will themselves be shut out from Love.

(28) **He went before, ascending up to Jerusalem.**—Better, *going up*, as elsewhere throughout the New Testament. The words indicate the same mode of journeying as that which we have traced before—the Master going on in advance, and the disciples following. (See Notes on chap. viii. 1; Mark x. 32.)

The journey from Jericho to Jerusalem was literally an ascent all the way (see Note on chap. x. 30), and in this sense, as well as following the language common to most nations, in speaking of their capitals, the verb might well be used. The English word "ascend," however, is not used elsewhere in the New Testament of any earthly journeys.

(29—38) **When he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany.**—On the general narrative, see Notes come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called *the mount* of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, (30) saying, Go ye into the village over against *you;* in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring *him hither.* (31) And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose *him?* thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him. (32) And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them. (33) And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt? (34) And they said, The Lord hath need of him. (35) And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon. (36) And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way. (37) And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; (38) saying, Blessed *be* the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. (39) And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. (40) And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

(41) And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,

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on Matt. xxi. 1—11; Mark xi. 1—11. In details we note (1) that St. Luke unites the "Bethphage" of St. Matthew with the "Bethany" of St. Mark; (2) that, as a stranger to Judæa, he speaks of the "mountain *that was called* the Mount of Olives. Possibly, indeed, both here and in chap. xxi. 37, as certainly in Acts i. 12, he uses the Greek equivalent for Olivet (the Latin *Olivetum*, or "place of Olives") as a proper name. The absence of the article before the Greek for "Olives," and the accentuation of the words in many MSS., seem decisive in favour of this view.

(30, 31) **Go ye into the village over against you.**—The agreement with St. Matthew and St. Mark is singularly close.

(31) **Because the Lord hath need of him.**—See Note on Matt. xxi. 3 as to the meaning of the word "Lord" as thus used.

(33) **The owners thereof.**—In this instance St. Luke, though less graphic in his narrative generally, is more specific than St. Mark, who represents the question as coming from "some of those that stood by." The use of the same Greek word for "owner" and for the "Lord" affords a striking example of the elasticity of its range of meaning.

(35) **They cast their garments upon the colt.**—St. Luke agrees with St. Mark in speaking of the "colt" only, not of the "ass."

(36) **They spread their clothes in the way.**—Better, *garments*, the word being the same as in the preceding verse, and in both cases meaning the outer garment or cloak. (See Note on Matt. v. 40.) St. Luke, it may be noticed, does not mention the "branches of trees" of which St. Matthew and St. Mark speak. The verb implies the constantly repeated act of casting down the garments as the Lord rode on.

(37) **The descent of the mount of Olives.**—The Greek word for "descent" is not used by any other New Testament writer. As being a technical geographical word, it was one that might naturally be used by one who may have been a pupil of Strabo, or a student of his works. (See *Introduction.*)

**To praise God.**—The Greek verb is another instance of a word used by St. Luke (seven times) and St. Paul (twice), and by them only in the New Testament.

**All the mighty works . . .**—Literally, *powers*, and so *works of power*. The words probably refer to the recent miracle at Jericho (chap. xviii. 35—43; Matt. xx. 29—34; Mark x. 46—52), and, as interpreted by St. John's Gospel, the recent raising of Lazarus.

(38) **Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.** The substitution of "glory" for the "Hosanna" of St. Matthew and St. Mark is characteristic of the Gentile Evangelist. The parallelism between the shouts of the multitude before the Passion, and the song of the angels at the Nativity (chap. ii. 14) is, in many ways, suggestive. There the voices spoke of "peace on earth;" here the multitude, prophesying unconsciously, speak of "peace in heaven."

(39) **And some of the Pharisees.**—The comparative brevity of St. Luke's description is more than compensated by the interest of the two narratives that follow, and which are found in his Gospel only. The section of the Pharisees that spoke was probably that which had all along more or less acknowledged our Lord as a "Master" (*i.e.*, Teacher or Rabbi), and were willing to give Him what they thought a fair share of respect as such. To go beyond that, to receive Him as the promised "He that cometh," as "the king of Israel, the Christ," seemed to them but the wild frenzy of the disciples, which the Master ought to check.

(40) **If these should hold their peace.**—Here, then, at the very moment when He foresaw most clearly His own approaching end, and the failure of all earthly hopes of the city over which He wept, our Lord accepted every word that disciples or multitude had uttered of Him as being in the fullest sense true.

**The stones would immediately cry out.**—The startling imagery had a precedent in the language of Habbakuk (ii. 11), "The stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it."

(41) **He beheld the city, and wept over it.**—This, and the tears over the grave of Lazarus (John xi. 35), are the only recorded instances of our Lord's tears. It is significant that in the one case they flow from the intensity of personal friendship, in the other from that of the intense love of country which we know as patriotism. Neither element of character could well be wanting in the perfect pattern of a holiness truly human.

(42) saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things *which belong* unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. (43) For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, (44) and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation. (45) And he went into the temple,[a] and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought; (46) saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves. (47) And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him, (48) and could not find what they might do: for all the people were[1] very attentive to hear him.

CHAPTER XX.—(1) And it came to pass,[b] *that* on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon *him* with the elders, (2) and spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority dost thou

[1] Or, *hanged on him.*

A.D. 33.

[b] Matt. 21. 23.

[a] Matt. 21. 12.

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(42) **If thou hadst known, even thou.**—The emphatic repetition of the pronoun, as in Isa. xlviii. 15; li. 12; Ezek. v. 8; vi. 3; Ps. lxxvi. 7, speaks of the strongest possible emotion. The broken form of the sentence, "If thou hadst known . . .," with no corresponding clause as to what would then have followed; the "at least in this thy day," the day that was still its own, in which it was called to repentance and action, all point to the words as being the utterance of the deepest human sorrow that the Son of Man had known.

**The things which belong unto thy peace.**—Literally, *the things that make for*, or *tend to, peace.* The Greek is the same as that translated "conditions of peace" in chap. xiv. 32 (where see Note); in this case, obviously, the "things that make for peace" are repentance, reformation, righteousness.

**Now they are hid.**—The Greek tense implies, by a distinction hard to express in English, in conjunction with the adverb "now," that the concealment of the things that made for the peace of Jerusalem, was a thing completed in the past.

(43) **The days shall come upon thee.**—We again come upon a cluster of words peculiar, as far as the New Testament is concerned, to St. Luke, and belonging to the higher forms of historical composition.

**Shall cast a trench about thee.**—The Greek substantive means primarily a stake, then the "stockade" or "palisade" by which the camp of a besieging army was defended, then the earth-work upon which the stockade was fixed. In the latter case, of course, a trench was implied, but the word meant the embankment rather than the excavation. The better MSS. give for "cast" a verb which more distinctly conveys the idea of an encampment.

(44) **And shall lay thee even with the ground.**—See Note on Matt. xxiv. 2. What is there said of the Temple, is here repeated of the city as a whole, and describes a general demolition of everything that could be demolished. So Josephus (*Wars*, viii. 1, § 1) describes the work as being done so effectively that, with the exception of one or two towers and part of the walls, the fortifications were so laid even with the ground that there was nothing left to make those that came thither believe that that part of the city had been inhabited.

**The time of thy visitation.**—The phrase is not found in any other Gospel. The idea of "visitation" presents two aspects, one of pardon (chap. i. 68, 78; vii. 16), the other of chastisement (1 Pet. ii. 12). In both, however, the act of "visiting" implied looking after, caring for, and so a purpose of mercy. Modern usage—especially, perhaps, the common legal phrase of a man's dying by the "visitation of God," of sickness being "His visitation"—has given undue prominence to the latter thought. Here it appears to include both. The Christ had visited it first with a message of peace. Then came the discipline of suffering, and Jerusalem knew not how to make a right use of either.

(45—48) **And he went into the temple.**—See Notes on Matt. xxi. 12—17; Mark xi. 15—19. St. Luke apparently agrees with St. Matthew in thinking of the expulsion of the money-changers as taking place on the same day as the Entry. His narrative is here the least descriptive of the three.

(47) **And he taught daily in the temple.**—Literally, *He was teaching.*

**The chief of the people.**—Literally, *the first of the people.* The word is the same as in Mark vi. 21, for "the chief estates" of Galilee. Here, apparently, it denotes those who, whether members of the Sanhedrin or not, were men of mark—notables, as it were—among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. As to the purpose ascribed to them, see Note on Mark xi. 18.

(48) **All the people were very attentive to hear him.**—Literally, *hung upon him as they heard.* The Greek phrase is another of the words characteristic of St. Luke. Its force may be gathered by its use in the Greek version of Gen. xliv. 30, where it stands for "his life is bound up in" (or, *hangs upon*) "the lad's life."

## XX.

(1—8) **And it came to pass.**—See Notes on Matt. xxi. 23—27; Mark xi. 27—33.

**And preached the gospel.**—The Greek verb (*to evangelise*) is one specially characteristic of St. Luke. Neither St. Mark nor St. John use it at all; St. Matthew once only (xi. 5), in a passive sense; St. Luke ten times in the Gospel, fifteen times in the Acts. So in the Epistles, neither St. John nor St. James use it; St. Peter once; St. Paul twenty times. It, too, was clearly one of the words which the two friends and fellow-workers had in common.

**Came upon him.**—The Greek word, like the English, expresses something of a sudden, and, it might be, concerted movement.

(2) **Tell us, by what authority . . . ?**—The form of the question is nearly identical in the three Gospels.

these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority? (3) And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me: (4) the baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? (5) And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not? (6) But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet. (7) And they answered, that they could not tell whence *it was.* (8) And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

(9) Then began he to speak to the people this parable; A certain man planted a vineyard,[a] and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time. (10) And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent *him* away empty. (11) And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated *him* shamefully, and sent *him* away empty. (12) And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast *him* out. (13) Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence *him* when they see him. (14) But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be our's. (15) So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed *him.* What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them? (16) He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard *it,* they said, God forbid. (17) And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected,[b] the same is become the head of the corner? (18) Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

(19) And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them. (20) And they watched *him,* and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.

[b] Ps. 118. 22.

[a] Matt. 21. 33.

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(6) **All the people will stone us.**—St. Luke gives the more vivid utterance in place of the more general "we fear the people" in the other Gospels. As indicating the readiness of the people of Jerusalem to proceed to extremities of this kind, we may refer to their treatment of our Lord (John viii. 59; x. 31) and Stephen (Acts vii. 58, 59).

(9–19) **Then began he to speak to the people.**—See Notes on Matt. xxi. 33—46; Mark xii. 1—12. The presence of this, as well as of the last section, in the first three Gospels, with so little variation, indicates the impression which these facts and teaching made at the time, and probably also that they occupied a prominent place in the early records that served as the basis of our present Gospels.

**A certain man planted a vineyard.**—The absence of the fuller detail in St. Matthew and St. Mark shows that St. Luke's report was not derived from them, but probably from a version, orally repeated, of that which they reported more fully. On the other hand, the addition of "for a long time" is peculiar to St. Luke, and reminds us of the like phrase in Matt. xxv. 19.

(10) **Beat him, and sent him away empty.**—The description agrees almost verbally with St. Mark.

(11) **And sent him away empty.**—The emphatic repetition of the words that had been used in the previous verse is peculiar to St. Luke.

(12) **They wounded him also.**—The verb is peculiar to St. Luke, and has a characteristic half-surgical ring in it. It is used by him again in Acts xix. 16.

(13) **It may be.**—The doubt implied in the qualification is a feature peculiar to St. Luke's report. The better MSS. omit the clause "when they see him."

(16) **He shall come and destroy these husbandmen.**—St. Luke agrees with St. Mark in putting these words into our Lord's lips, and not, as St. Matthew does, into those of the by-standers.

**They said, God forbid.**—No other English phrase could well be substituted for this, but it is worth remembering that the name of God does not appear in the original, and that the ejaculation is simply, as it were, a negative Amen, "So be it not." Its insertion here is peculiar to St. Luke, nor does it occur elsewhere in the Gospels. St. Paul uses it frequently, as in Rom. iii. 4, 6, 31; vi. 2, 15, *et al.*

(17) **And he beheld them.**—Better, *He looked on them.* The Greek verb implies the gaze turned and fixed on its object, in addition to the mere act of beholding.

(18) **Whosoever shall fall upon that stone.**—See Note on Matt. xxi. 44. The verse, which is omitted by many of the best MSS. in St. Matthew, is found in all MSS. of St. Luke. If we were to receive it, on this evidence, as belonging strictly to the latter Gospel only, the Greek word for "bruised" might take its place among those classical, or perhaps *quasi*-medical, terms characteristic of St. Luke. (See Note on verse 12, and *Introduction.*)

(20–26) **And they watched him.**—See Notes on Matt. xxii. 15—22 and Mark xii. 13—17.

**And sent forth spies.**—The noun is, again, one of St. Luke's characteristic words not used by any

(21) And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly,[a] neither acceptest thou the person *of any*, but teachest the way of God truly:[1] (22) is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cæsar, or no? (23) But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me? (24) Shew me a penny.[2] Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Cæsar's. (25) And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's, and unto God the things which be God's. (26) And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.

(27) Then came to *him* certain of the Sadducees,[b] which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him, (28) saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. (29) There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children. (30) And the second took her to wife, and he died childless. (31) And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died. (32) Last of all the woman died also. (33) Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife. (34) And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: (35) but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: (36) neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. (37) Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush,[c] when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. (38) For he is not a God of the

[a] Matt. 22. 16.

[1] Or, *of a truth.*

[2] See Matt. 18. 28.

[b] Matt. 22. 23.

[c] Ex. 3. 6.

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other New Testament writer. It expresses rather the act of those who lie in ambush, than that of "spies" in the strict sense of the words. St. Luke is, on the one hand, less definite as to the parties to the conspiracy than the other Gospels, and on the other hand more explicit as to its aim. They wanted materials for an accusation before Pilate, as well as for one before the Sanhedrin. On the omission of the name of the Herodians, see Note on chap. vi. 11.

**Power and authority.**—We have again the characteristic combination of the two substantives. (See Note on chap. xii. 11.)

(21) **Neither acceptest thou the person of any.**—To "accept the person" takes the place of "regarding" or "looking at" the person of Matt. xxii. 16, where see Note. The precise combination which St. Luke uses meets us again in Gal. ii. 6.

(23) **Their craftiness.**—The Greek noun does not appear in the other Gospels, but is used four times by St. Paul, as in 2 Cor. iv. 2; Eph. iv. 14.

(26) **And they could not take hold of his words.**—As St. Luke is fuller in his account of the plot of the questioners (verse 20), so is he in that of its defeat.

**They marvelled at his answer.**—There is an interesting, though obviously undesigned, parallelism with the narrative of the incident in which the Lord Jesus was first brought face to face with the Rabbis of Jerusalem. Then also "they were astonished at His answers" (chap. ii. 47). The childhood was, in this respect, a prophecy of the manhood.

(27—39) **Then came to him certain of the Sadducees.**—See Notes on Matt. xxii. 23—33; Mark xii. 18—27.

(34) **The children of this world marry.**—The three reports of the question are all but absolutely identical. In the form of the answer there are slight variations. The contrast between "the children of this world" or "age," those, *i.e.*, who belong to it (see Note on chap. xvi. 8), and those of "that world" or "age," is peculiar to St. Luke. In both cases the word rests primarily on the idea of time rather than place. It may be noted that no other writer in the New Testament uses the form of words, "*that* world," the age or period that is *there*, not *here*, for the life of the eternal kingdom. The more common phrase is "the world to come" (Matt. xii. 32; xix. 30).

(35) **They which shall be accounted worthy.**—Another word common to St. Luke and St. Paul (2 Thess. i. 5), and to them only in the New Testament.

(36) **Neither can they die any more.**—The record of this teaching is peculiar to St. Luke. The implied thought is that death and marriage are correlative facts in God's government of the world, the one filling up the gaps which are caused by the other. In the life eternal there is no need for an addition in this way to the number of the elect, and therefore there is no provision for it.

**Equal unto the angels.**—The one Greek word which answers to the English four is again peculiar to St. Luke.

**The children of God, being the children of the resurrection.**—It is obvious that here the resurrection is assumed to be unto life and to a share in the divine kingdom. The fact that men were counted worthy to obtain that resurrection was a proof that they were "children of God," and as such on the same footing as those other "sons of God," whom the language of Scripture (Job i. 6; xxxviii. 7, and possibly Gen. vi. 12) identified with the angels.

(37) **Even Moses shewed at the bush.**—The precise meaning of the verb is that of "indicating," "pointing to," rather than actually "shewing." In his mode of reference to the words of Ex. iii. 6, St. Luke agrees with St. Mark (xii. 26).

(38) **For all live unto him.**—St. Luke alone adds the words. They are of value as developing the

dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.

(39) Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said. (40) And after that they durst not ask him any *question at all.* (41) And he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son?[a] (42) And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, (43) till I make thine enemies thy footstool. (44) David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his son?

(45) Then in the audience of all the people he said unto his disciples, (46) Beware of the scribes,[b] which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; (47) which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation.

CHAPTER XXI.—(1) And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.[c] (2) And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.[1] (3) And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: (4) for all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

(5) And as some spake of the temple,[d] how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, (6) *As for* these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. (7) And they asked him,

A.D. 33.

[c] Mark 12. 41.

[a] Matt. 22. 42.
[1] See Mark 12. 42.

[d] Matt. 24. 1.

[b] Matt. 23. 5.

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meaning of those that precede them. All life, in the truest, highest sense of that term, depends upon our relation to God. We live to Him, and in Him. And so when He reveals Himself as the God of those who have passed from earth, He witnesses that that relation continues still. They are not dead, but are still living unto Him. We may, perhaps, connect the thought thus expressed with St. Paul's words, "in Him we live, and move, and have our being," in his speech at Athens. (See Note on Acts xvii. 28.)

(39) **Master, thou hast well said.**—The words came, it is obvious, from the better section of the Pharisees, who welcomed this new defence of the doctrine on which their faith rested.

(40) **They durst not ask him any question at all.**—The singular omission by St. Luke of the question which is recorded by St. Matthew (xxii. 34—40) and St. Mark (xii. 28—34), and which would have fallen in so well with the general scope and tenor of his Gospel, may take its place, though we cannot account for it except on the supposition that he did not know the facts, as one of the many proofs of his entire independence as a narrator.

(41, 42) **How say they that Christ is David's son?**—Better, *that the Christ.* See Notes on Matt. xxii. 41—46; Mark xii. 35—37. The implied subject of the verb is clearly, as in St. Mark, "the scribes." St. Luke agrees with St. Mark in not giving the preliminary question, "What think ye of Christ? . . ," which we find in St. Matthew.

(45—47) **Then in the audience of all the people.**—Better, *in the hearing.* See Notes on Matt. xxiii., especially verses 6 and 7, and Mark xii. 38—40. St. Luke's report agrees almost verbally with the latter.

**Chief rooms.**—Better, *chief places.*

### XXI.

(1—4) **And saw the rich men casting their gifts.**—See Notes on Mark xii. 41—44. This may, perhaps, be thought of as one of the incidents which St. Luke derived from verbal communication with his brother-evangelist. (See *Introduction.*)

(2) **A certain poor widow.**—St. Luke's word for "poor" differs from St. Mark's, and seems to have been carefully chosen to express the fact that the widow, though "needy," and compelled to work for her scanty maintenance, was yet not a "beggar," as the more common word for "poor" suggested. It is not found elsewhere in the New Testament.

(3) **Of a truth.**—St. Luke's use (according to the better MSS.) of the Greek for "truly," instead of St. Mark's "Amen" (so in the Greek), may, perhaps, be noted as characteristic.

(4) **For all these have . . . cast.**—Better, *all these cast . . .* , and so in the next clause.

**Unto the offerings of God.**—The better MSS. omit the last two words. "Offerings," literally, *gifts.*

(5, 6) **And as some spake of the temple.**—See Notes on Matt. xxiv. 1, 2; Mark xiii. 1, 2, where the "some" are identified with the disciples.

**Goodly stones.**—These were probably so called, either as being sculptured, or as being of marble, or porphyry, or other of the more precious materials used in building.

**Gifts.**—St. Luke uses the more strictly classical word for "offerings," according to some of the best MSS., in the self-same form as the *Anathĕma* (1 Cor. xii. 3; xvi. 12), which elsewhere in the New Testament is confined to the idea of that which is set apart, not for a blessing, but a curse. The fact that he is the only writer to use it in its good sense is characteristic of his Gentile and classical training. Other MSS., however, give the more usual term, *Anathēma*, as if it had been found necessary to distinguish the form of the word according to its uses.

(7—19) **Master, but when shall these things be?**—See Notes on Matt. xxiv. 3—14; Mark xiii. 3—13. St. Luke omits the Mount of Olives as being the scene of the question and the prophecy, and the names of the questioners, the latter being given by St. Mark only. The variations in the report throughout imply an independent source—probably oral—of information, as distinct from transcription either from one of the Gospels or from a document common to both of them. On the whole, he agrees much more with St. Mark than St. Matthew.

saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign *will there be* when these things shall come to pass? (8) And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ;* and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. (9) But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end *is* not by and by. (10) Then said he unto them,[a] Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: (11) and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. (12) But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute *you,* delivering *you* up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. (13) And it shall turn to you for a testimony. (14) Settle *it* therefore in your hearts,[b] not to meditate before what ye shall answer: (15) for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. (16) And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and *some* of you shall they cause to be put to death. (17) And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake. (18) But there shall not an hair of your head perish.[c] (19) In your patience possess ye your souls. (20) And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies,[d]

[a] Matt. 24. 7.

[b] Matt. 10. 19.

[c] Matt. 10. 30.

[d] Matt. 24. 15.

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(8) **Saying, I am Christ.**—Literally, *I am.* The italics show that the word "Christ" is an interpolation. The sentence is better left in the vagueness of the original, or with only a pronoun as the predicate, *I am He.* The use of the words in John i. 21, viii. 58, may be referred to as showing that they had become significant even without a predicate.

**The time draweth near.**—Better, *the season has come near.*

**Go ye not therefore . . .**—The better MSS. omit the last words.

(9) **Commotions.**—The word does not occur in the other Gospels, but is used by St. Paul in 1 Cor. xiv. 33 ("confusion"), 2 Cor. vi. 5, xii. 20 ("tumults"). Its exact meaning is *unsettlement, disorder.*

**Be not terrified.**—The word is used by St. Luke only, here and in xxiv. 37, in the New Testament.

**By and by.**—Better, as elsewhere, *immediately.*

(11) **Famines and pestilences.**—The mention of the latter is, as far as the best MSS. are concerned, a feature peculiar to St. Luke. Others, however, give the same combination in Matt. xxiv. 7. The Greek nouns are all but identical in sound (*limos* = famine, and *loimos* = pestilence), and there is accordingly a kind of rhythmical emphasis of sound which cannot be reproduced in English.

**Fearful sights.**—The Greek word, literally *things of terror,* is peculiar to St. Luke. He omits here "the beginning of troubles," or "travail-pangs," which we find in St. Matthew and St. Mark.

(12) **Before all these.**—The special indication that the sufferings from persecution should precede those from wars, famines, and the like, is peculiar to St. Luke, and was, it need hardly be said, abundantly fulfilled.

(13) **It shall turn to you for a testimony.**—There are but two writers in the New Testament who use the verb (literally, *to come out*) in this figurative sense. St. Luke is one, and the other is St. Paul, in a passage so closely parallel to this as to read almost like an echo of it (Phil. i. 19). The "testimony" is defined by Mark xiii. 9, as being borne to the kings and rulers before whom the disciples were to stand.

(14) **Not to meditate before . . .**—The word differs from that used in the parallel passage of Mark xiii. 11, "take no thought" (the addition of "premeditate" there is very doubtful), as involving less anxiety. It is not found elsewhere in the New Testament, but the uncompounded verb meets us, as used by St. Paul, in 1 Tim. iv. 15.

(15) **I will give you a mouth and wisdom.**—The promise, even in its form, reminds us of that given to Moses when he drew back from the task of uttering God's message to His people (Ex. iv. 15, 16). The inward faculty of thought, the outward power of uttering thought in words, should both be given. The words are not without their importance as bearing on the supposed distinction between verbal inspiration and that which is confined to thoughts. So far as it goes, it is against that distinction. And indeed, useful as it may seem in theory, as meeting some of the difficulties, real or supposed, which attach to the theory of verbal inspiration, it seems clear, even on purely psychological grounds, that, as men think through the medium of language, the inspiration which extends to thoughts must extend also, and under the same laws and conditions, to the words in which they are expressed. What those laws and conditions are is a wider question, on which this is not the place to enter. The answer is to be found in a reverential and careful induction from the facts which the phenomena of inspiration present to us.

**Adversaries.**—Another favourite word of St. Paul's (1 Cor. xvi. 9; Phil. i. 28, *et al.*), and used by no other writer in the New Testament except St. Luke.

(18) **There shall not an hair of your head perish.**—The promise does not meet us in this form in the parallel passages of the two other Gospels. A like promise meets us in Matt. x. 30, Luke xii. 7. The very same phrase occurs, however, almost as if it were a quotation from this Gospel, in St. Paul's address to the sailors, in Acts xxvii. 34.

(19) **In your patience possess ye your souls.**—Better, *By your endurance gain ye your lives.* The verb, unless used in the perfect tense, always involves the idea of "acquiring" rather than "possessing," and the command so understood answers to the promise, "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved," in Matt. xxiii. 13, Mark xiii. 13. Some of the best MSS., indeed, give this also as a promise, "By your endurance ye shall gain."

(20—24) **When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies.**—See Notes on Matt. xxiii.

then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. (21) Then let them which are in Judæa flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. (22) For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. (23) But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. (24) And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

(25) And there shall be signs in the sun,[a] and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; (26) men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. (27) And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. (28) And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

[a] Matt. 24. 29.

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15—21; Mark xiii. 14—19. This is St. Luke's equivalent, possibly chosen as more intelligible for his Gentile readers, for "the abomination of desolation," which we find in St. Matthew and St. Mark. As far as it goes, it favours the view that he and others saw the "abomination" in the presence of the invading armies. On the other hand, it is possible, accepting, as we must accept, the thought of a substituted phrase, that we have one which, while it gives a partial explanation, fails to exhaust the meaning of the darker and more mysterious phrase. The occurrence of the word "desolation" in the latter clause of the verse, obviously favours the hypothesis now suggested.

(21) **Let not them that are in the countries . . .**—The noun is sometimes rendered "coasts," sometimes "region," sometimes "fields." The latter meaning would seem to be that here intended. Comp. John iv. 35, Jas. v. 4, where the word is so rendered.

(22) **These be the days of vengeance.**—The words answer to the "great tribulation" of St. Matthew and St. Mark, and seem, as indeed does St. Luke's report of the discourse throughout, to be of the nature of a paraphrase. The word "vengeance" may have been chosen, on this view, in allusive reference to the teaching of chap. xviii. 7, 8. It may be noted as one which, though not exclusively used by them, is yet characteristic both of St. Luke and St. Paul (Rom. xii. 19; 2 Cor. vii. 11; and 2 Thess. i. 8). The reference to the "things which are (better, *have been*) written," is peculiar to St. Luke.

(23) **Great distress in the land.**—Literally, *great need*, or *necessity*. The word, which St. Luke uses as an equivalent for "tribulation," is not found in the other Gospels in this sense. It is, however, so used by St. Paul (1 Cor. vii. 26; 2 Cor. vi. 4; xii. 10; 1 Thess. iii. 7).

(24) **And they shall fall by the edge of the sword.**—There is nothing in the parallel prophecies of the other two Gospels that answers to this special description, and it is possible, as suggested above, that St. Luke's report here has somewhat of the character of a free paraphrase, such as was natural in an oral communication of what was variously remembered.

**Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.**—The thought expressed in this clause, that the punishment of Israel, and the desolation of Jerusalem were to have a limit, that there was one day to be a restoration of both, is noticeable as agreeing with the whole line of St. Paul's thoughts in Rom. ix.—xi., and being in all probability the germ of which those thoughts are the development. In Rom. xi. 25, "till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in," we have a distinct echo of the words, "until the times (better, *the seasons*) of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

(25—33) **And there shall be signs in the sun.**—See Notes on Matt. xxiv. 29—35, Mark xiii. 24—31, where the "signs" are defined as the "sun being darkened, and the moon not giving her light."

**Distress of nations.**—The Greek for the first noun means literally, *constraint*, the sense of being hemmed in, as when we say "in great straits." It is used by St. Paul in 2 Cor. ii. 4, and not elsewhere in the New Testament. The word for "perplexity" is used by St. Luke only.

**The sea and the waves roaring.**—The better MSS. give a different punctuation and reading, *with perplexity from the roar of the sea, and of the surge*, or *wave*. In the common reading we have another instance of agreement with St. Paul, in 1 Cor. xiii. 1, where the word is rendered "tinkling"—better, *echoing*, or *resounding*. Assuming, as has been suggested above, that St. Luke's report is of the nature of a paraphrase, we may, perhaps, connect this feature in it with his own experience. To one who had known the perils of waters narrated in Acts xxvii., no picture of the more dread phenomena of nature could be complete without "the sea and the waves roaring."

(26) **Men's hearts failing them for fear.**—The verb so rendered is used by St. Luke only in the New Testament. Its literal meaning is *to breathe out the soul*, and it was, therefore, a word which would naturally enter into the vocabulary of a physician, both in its primary and figurative sense. The mental state which it expresses exactly agrees with that described in Acts xxvii. 20, in connection with the tempest.

**For looking after those things.**—Literally, *for expectation*, the noun being used only by St. Luke in the New Testament.

(28) **Look up.**—The Greek word, literally, *bend up*, or *turn up*, meets us here and in chap. xiii. 11, and nowhere else in the New Testament, except in the doubtful passage of John viii. 7, 10.

**Redemption.**—The word, familiar as it is to us, is, in the special form here used, another of those characteristic of St. Paul's phraseology (Rom. iii. 24; viii. 23; 1 Cor. i. 30; Eph. i. 7, *et al.*). It occurs also in Heb. ix. 15, xi. 35. In its primary meaning here it points to the complete deliverance of the disciples from Jewish persecutions in Palestine that followed on the

(29) And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; (30) when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. (31) So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. (32) Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. (33) Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

(34) And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and *so* that day come upon you unawares. (35) For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. (36) Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. (37) And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called *the mount* of Olives. (38) And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.

CHAPTER XXII.—(1) Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh,[a] which is called the Passover. (2) And the chief

A.D. 33.

[a] Matt. 26. 2.

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destruction of Jerusalem. The Church of Christ was then delivered from what had been its most formidable danger.

(29) **And all the trees.**—The addition is peculiar to St. Luke. It confirms the impression that the words, which were spoken just before the Passover, when the flush of spring-tide life was seen in every grove and forest, were suggested by what met the eye of the disciples on the Mount of Olives. (See Note on Matt. xxiv. 32.) One such tree, we know, had been found in full foliage (Matt. xxi. 19).

(31) **Know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.**—St. Luke's paraphrase fills up and explains what stands in St. Matthew and St. Mark more simply, "It is near, even at the doors."

(32, 33) **Verily I say unto you . . .**—Here the variation ceases for a time, and the two verses are identical with Matt. xxiv. 34, 35, and Mark xiii. 30, 31.

(34) **Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time . . .**—We again pass into what has nothing corresponding to it in the other reports of the discourse, and may therefore be assumed to be of the nature of a paraphrase. We note in it, as such, that, as far as the New Testament is concerned, St. Luke only uses the words for "overcharged" and "surfeiting" (the latter word belonged, more or less, to the vocabulary of medical science); St. Luke and St. Paul alone those for "drunkenness" (Rom. xiii. 13; Gal. v. 21), and cares "of this life" (1 Cor. vi. 3, 4), and "unawares" (1 Thess. v. 3). In the last passage we have what reads almost like a distinct echo from this verse. The whole passage, it may be noted, falls in with St. Luke's characteristic tendency to record all protions of our Lord's teaching that warned men against sensuality and worldliness.

(35) **As a snare . . .**—The word is not found in the other Gospels, but is used several times by St. Paul (Rom. xi. 9; 1 Tim. iii. 7; vi. 9; 2 Tim. ii. 26).

**Them that dwell . . .**—Elsewhere in the New Testament, the verb is used in its literal meaning of "sitting." In the sense of "dwelling" or "residing," we find it, probably, again in Acts ii. 2.

(36) **Pray always.**—The word is not the same commonly used for "pray," but occurs once only in the other Gospels (Matt. ix. 38). St. Luke uses it fifteen times in the Gospel and Acts together, and St. Paul six times (2 Cor. v. 20; viii. 4; x. 2, *et seq.*). It is not used by any other New Testament writer.

**That ye may be accounted worthy . . .**—See Note on chap. xx. 35. The better MSS., however, give, "that ye may have strength to escape."

**To stand before the Son of man.**—The same preposition is used with special reference to the final judgment in 2 Cor. v. 10, 1 Thess. iii. 13.

(37) **In the day time . . . at night.**—Literally, *in the days . . . the nights*, the words pointing to the mode in which the week was spent from the first day to the evening of the fifth.

**Abode.**—The word is better translated *lodged* in Matt. xxi. 12. Strictly speaking, it meant to lodge, not in a room, but in the court-yard of a house; and so was used generally, in military language, for a "bivouac." It would seem to have been chosen by both Evangelists (it does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament) to include the fact, implied in all four, and definitely stated by St. John, that most of the nights were spent not in a house, but in the garden, or orchard, of Gethsemane (John xviii. 1, 2).

**That is called the mount of Olives.**—Better, perhaps, here, as in chap. xix. 29 (where see Note), *that is called Olivet.*

(38) **All the people came early in the morning.**—The Greek verb, which answers to the five last words, does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament, but is not uncommon in the Greek version of the Old, as in Gen. xix. 2, 27; Song Sol. vii. 12; and figuratively, in Job viii. 5; Jer. xxv. 3; Wisd. vi. 14. It may be that the general statement thus given includes the fourth and fifth days of the week of the Passion, but it is remarkable that all three Gospels are silent as to anything that happened on those days till we come to the Paschal Supper. We may, perhaps, reverently conjecture that they were spent by our Lord, in part at least, in Gethsemane (John xviii. 2), in prayer and meditation, in preparing Himself and the disciples for the coming trials of the Passion. Possibly, also, the narrative of the Woman taken in Adultery, which occupies so strangely doubtful a position in St. John's Gospel, may find its true place here. (See Note on John viii. 1.)

## XXII.

(1, 2) **Now, the feast of unleavened bread . . .**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 1—5; Mark xiv. 1, 2. St. Luke's way of giving a preliminary explanation of the Jews' Passover is characteristic of the Gentile Evangelist.

priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people.

(3) Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot,[a] being of the number of the twelve. (4) And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them. (5) And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money. (6) And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.[1]

(7) Then came the day of unleavened bread,[b] when the passover must be killed. (8) And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat. (9) And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare? (10) And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in. (11) And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? (12) And he shall show you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. (13) And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover. (14) And when the hour was come,[c] he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. (15) And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:[2] (16) for I say unto you,

[a] Matt. 26 14.

[1] Or, *without tumult.*

[b] Matt. 26. 17.

[c] Matt. 26. 20.

[2] Or, *I have heartily desired.*

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(3—6) **Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 14—16; Mark xiv. 10, 11. St. Luke stands alone in the first three Gospels as thus describing the origin of the Traitor's guilt. John xiii. 27 shows, however, that such a way of speaking had become common, though he places the "entrance" at a later stage. The use of the name Satan for the devil, as the author of the many forms of human evil, is, it need hardly be said, a prominent feature in St. Paul's writings (1 Cor. vii. 5; 2 Cor. ii. 11, xii. 7, *et al.*). Compare also St. Peter's speech in Acts v. 3, where Satan appears as instigating the sin of Ananias and Sapphira.

(4) **Chief priests and captains.**—The latter term is used by St. Luke, and by him only in the New Testament, of the officers who presided over the Levite guardians of the Temple. Here and in verse 52 it is used in the plural. In Acts iv. 1, v. 24, we read of "*the* captain of the Temple," presumably the chief officer in command. Such was in earlier times Pashur, the "governor of the house of the Lord" (Jer. xx. 1). As watchmen the Levite sentinels carried clubs, and would use them freely against any sacrilegious intruder. The attempt to seize our Lord, recorded in John vii. 32, shows why Judas applied to these officers as well as to the priests.

(6) **In the absence of the multitude.**—The marginal reading, *without a tumult,* is perhaps nearer to the meaning of the original.

(7—13) **Then came the day of unleavened bread.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 17—19; Mark xiv. 12—16. St. Luke, like St. Mark, writing for Gentiles, adds the explanatory note, "when the Passover must be killed," or, better, *sacrificed.* (Comp. "Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us," in 1 Cor. v. 7.)

(8) **He sent Peter and John.**—St. Luke's is the only Gospel that gives the names of the two disciples. They were together now, as they were afterwards in John xx. 3; xxi. 20; Acts iii. 1. We may, perhaps, recognise the purpose of a loving insight in the act which thus brought the two disciples together at a time when our Lord foresaw how much one would need the love and sympathy of the other.

(10) **A man . . . bearing a pitcher of water.**—The signal is one of the details common to St. Mark and St. Luke. (See Note on Mark xiv. 13.)

(11) **The Master.**—Literally, *the Teacher—i.e.,* the Rabbi whom the man acknowledged. The narrative agrees almost verbally with St. Mark's.

(14—18) **And when the hour was come.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 20; Mark xiv. 17. The other Gospels name "the evening." St. Luke uses simply "the hour" as referring to the appointed time, "in the evening" (literally, *between the two evenings, i.e.,* the close of twilight; see Ex. xii. 6), for the "killing," the lamb being eaten afterwards as soon as it was roasted. It is characteristic of the comparatively late date of St. Luke's narrative that he speaks of "the twelve *Apostles,*" while the other two reports speak of "the *disciples.*" (Comp. chaps. ix. 10, xvii. 5, xxiv. 10.)

(15) **With desire I have desired.**—The peculiar mode of expressing intensity by the use of a cognate noun with the verb of action, though found sometimes in other languages, is an idiom characteristically Hebrew (comp. "thou shalt surely die" for "dying thou shalt die," in Gen. ii. 17), and its use here suggests the thought that St. Luke heard what he reports from some one who repeated the very words which our Lord had spoken in Aramaic. The whole passage is peculiar to him, and implies that he had sought to fill up the gaps in the current oral teaching which is reproduced in St. Matthew and St. Mark. It was natural that in so doing he might feel some uncertainty as to the precise position of these supplementary incidents, and hence the difficulties, of no great importance, which present themselves on a comparison of the three narratives. The words now before us bear obviously the impression of having been spoken at the beginning of the Feast. The Master yearned, if we may so speak, for a last Passover with His "friends," as we yearn for a last Communion with ours; all the more so, we may believe, because it was in His purpose to perfect the former by transfiguring it into the latter. The words have been thought to confirm the view that our Lord was anticipating by twenty-four hours the strictly legal time of the Passover. It must be admitted, however, that they do not in themselves suggest that thought. All that can be said is that they fall in with it, if proved on independent evidence.

(16) **Until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.**—The words are obviously the expression of the same thought as those in Matt. xxvi. 29, where see

I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. (17) And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves: (18) for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

(19) And he took bread,[a] and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. (20) Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

(21) But,[b] behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me *is* with me on the table. (22) And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe

[a] Matt. 26. 26.

[b] Matt. 26. 21.

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Note. Here the word "fulfilled" presents a new depth of meaning. The "Passover" was fulfilled in the kingdom of God: (1) in the sacrifice on the cross; (2) in every commemoration of that sacrifice by the acts which He appointed. Every such act was one of Communion, not only of the disciples with each other, but with Him, and in it He is, as it were, joining in the feast with them. Hereafter, as in the promise of Rev. iii. 20, "I will sup with him, and he with Me," there will be a yet fuller consummation. (Comp. verse 18.)

(17) **Take this, and divide it among yourselves.**—The cup was probably the first of the three cups of wine, or wine mingled with water, which Jewish custom had added to the ritual of the Passover. As being a distinct act from that of verse 20, it is natural to infer that it had a distinct symbolic meaning. Looking to the fact that wine is partly the symbol, partly the antithesis, of spiritual energy in its highest form (comp. Zech. ix. 17; Acts ii. 13; Eph. v. 18), and to the re-appearance of the same somewhat exceptional word for "divide," in the tongues "parted, or *divided*, or distributed" ("cloven" is a mistranslation), in Acts ii. 3, we may see in this cup the symbol of the bestowal of the spiritual powers which each of the disciples was to receive, according to the gift of the self-same Spirit, who "*divideth* to every man severally as He will" (the Greek word in 1 Cor. xii. 11 is, however, different, though expressing the same thought), just as the second was the pledge of a yet closer fellowship with His own divine life.

(18) **I will not drink of the fruit of the vine.**—Better, *of the product.* (See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 29; Mark xiv. 25.) Here the words precede, in the other Gospels they follow, the institution of the Lord's Supper. It is not probable that the same words were repeated both before and after. The position which it occupies here, as standing parallel to what had before been said of the Passover, seems on the whole in favour of St. Luke's arrangement. On the other hand, it is noticeable, whatever explanation may be given of it, that St. Matthew and St. Mark omit (in the best MSS.) the word "new" as connected with the "covenant," and emphasise it as connected with "the fruit of the vine," while he omits in the latter case, and emphasises it in the former. It is, perhaps, allowable to think of him as taught by St. Paul, and possibly by Apollos, to embrace more fully than they did, in all its importance, the idea of the New Covenant as set forth in Gal. iii., iv., and Heb. vii.—x.

(19, 20) **He took bread, and gave thanks.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 26—28; Mark xiv. 22—25. The other two reports give "He blessed," instead of "He gave thanks." There is, of course, no real difference between them. Thanksgiving and blessing both entered into what we may call the Jewish "Grace," and were so far convertible terms. It is noticeable that St. Paul's account, in 1 Cor. xi. 23, agrees on this point with St. Luke's.

**Which is given for you.**—Literally, *which is now in the act of being given.* The sacrifice was already inchoate in will. St. Paul's report omits the participle.

**This do in remembrance of me.**—Literally, *as My memorial*, or, *as your memorial of Me.* The words are common to St. Luke and St. Paul, but are not found in the other two reports. The word for "remembrance" occurs, in the New Testament, only here and in Heb. x. 3. In the Greek version of the Old Testament it is applied to the shew-bread (Lev. xxiv. 7), to the blowing of trumpets (Num. x. 10), in the titles of Ps. xxxviii. 1 ("to bring to remembrance,") and Ps. lxx. 1. The word had thus acquired the associations connected with a religious memorial, and might be applied to a sacrifice as commemorative, though it did not in itself involve the idea of sacrificing. The fact that our Lord and His disciples had been eating of a sacrifice which was also a memorial, gives a special force to the words thus used. In time to come, they were to remember Him as having given Himself, sacrificed Himself, for them, and this was to be the memorial in which memory was to express itself, and by which it was to be quickened. It may be noted that the early Liturgies, as a rule, follow St. Luke's report, attaching the word "memorial" sometimes to the bread, sometimes to the cup, sometimes to both.

(20) **This cup is the new testament in my blood.**—Better, *New Covenant.* The adjective is, in the best MSS., peculiar to St. Luke, as also is the "shed for you" instead of "shed for many." The participle is in the present tense, *which is being shed*, like the *being given*, in verse 19. St. Paul and St. Luke agree in placing the giving of the cup "after they had supped." (See Note on Matt. xxvi. 28.)

(21—23) **But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me . . .**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 21, 25; Mark xiv. 18, 21; John xiii. 21, 35. St. Luke's account is here the briefest, St. John's by far the fullest. There is again a slight discrepancy in the order of facts, St. Luke placing the mention of the Betrayal after, St. Matthew and St. Mark before, the institution of the memorial. St. John, who makes no mention of the institution, leaves the question open. On the whole, the order of the first two Gospels seems here the most probable, and agrees better with the fourth. The *data* before us do not enable us to say with certainty whether Judas partook of the memorial; but, if we follow the first two Gospels, it would seem probable that he did not.

(22) **As it was determined.**—The word is eminently characteristic of St. Luke. (Comp. Acts ii. 23; x. 42; xvii. 26, 31.)

**Woe unto that man . . .**—As occurring in all the first three Gospels, the words must be noted as unto that man by whom he is betrayed! (23) And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

(24) And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. (25) And he said unto them,[a] the kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. (26) But ye *shall* not *be* so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. (27) For whether *is* greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? *is* not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth. (28) Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. (29) And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; (30) that ye may eat

[a] Matt. 20. 25.

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among those that had made an indelible impression on those who heard them, and were therefore reproduced verbatim in the midst of many variations on other points of the narrative.

(24) **And there was also a strife among them.**—The incident that follows is peculiar to St. Luke. The noun which he uses for "strife" does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament, but the corresponding adjective meets us in the "contentious" of 1 Cor. xi. 16. The dispute was apparently the sequel of many previous debates of the same kind, as, *e.g.*, in chap. ix. 46; Matt. xviii. 1; Mark ix. 34; and the prayer of the two sons of Zebedee (Matt. xx. 23; Mark x. 37). What had just passed probably led to its revival. Who was greatest? Was it Peter, to whom had been promised the keys of the kingdom, or John, who reclined on the Master's bosom, or Andrew, who had been first-called? Even the disciples who were in the second group of the Twelve, might have cherished the hope that those who had been thus rebuked for their ambition or their want of faith had left a place vacant to which they might now hopefully aspire.

(25) **The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them.**—See Notes on Matt. xx. 25; Mark x. 42. The repetition of the same words that had then been spoken in answer to the petition of the sons of Zebedee, suggests the probability that they were again prominent in the strife for pre-eminence.

**Are called benefactors.**—This takes the place of "their great ones exercise authority upon them," in St. Matthew and St. Mark. Antiochus VII. of Syria, and Ptolemy III. of Egypt, were examples of kings who had borne the title of *Euergetes*, or benefactor. There is apparently an emphasis on "are called" as contrasted with "let him become," in the next verse. The world gave the title of "benefactor" to those who were great in power only. In Christ's kingdom true greatness was to be attained by benefiting others in the humblest services.

(26) **He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger.**—The latter word naturally carried with it, as in the old monastic rule, *juniores ad labores*, the idea of service. In Acts v. 6, "the young men" appear as a distinct body in the society of disciples, with functions like those of the later deacons or sextons; and the same sense is, perhaps, traceable in 1 Tim. v. 1; Tit. ii. 6; 1 Pet. v. 5.

**He that is chief.**—Here again the Greek word came to have a half-technical sense as equivalent, or nearly so, to bishop or presbyter. So in Heb. xiii. 7, 17, 24, where it is rendered "they that have the rule over you."

**He that doth serve.**—The verb is the same as that from which the word "deacon" is derived, and, with Matt. xxiii. 11, Mark x. 43, probably suggested the ecclesiastical use of the word. It is noticeable that the first recorded example of that use is in the salutation to "the bishops and deacons" of Philippi (Phil. i. 1), the Church which more than any other was under St. Luke's influence. The "seven" of Acts vi. 3, 5, of whom we commonly speak as the first deacons, are never so named in the New Testament.

(27) **I am among you as he that serveth.**—An obviously undesigned coincidence presents itself on a comparison of the words with the narrative of John xiii. 1—16, where see Notes. The Lord had actually on that very evening been among them, "as he that serveth," girded, like a slave, with the linen towel, and washing the feet of the disciples. He had seen, at the beginning of the feast, the latent germs of rivalry, the later development of which not even that example had been able to check.

(28) **Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.**—We trace a kind of loving tenderness in this recognition of faithfulness following upon the words of rebuke. The "temptations" cannot, it is clear, be those of which we commonly speak as *the* Temptation of the Christ, for that had been encountered in absolute solitude. The word must, accordingly be taken in its wider sense of "trials," as in 1 Cor. x. 13; Jas. i. 2, 12; 1 Pet. i. 6, and probably referred to the crises in our Lord's ministry (such, *e.g.*, as those in Matt. xii. 14, 46; John vi. 60, 68; xii. 43) when the enmity of scribes and rulers was most bitter, and many disciples had proved faithless and faint-hearted.

(29) **And I appoint unto you a kingdom.**—As being the verb from which is formed the noun for "covenant," or "testament," the Greek for "appoint," has a force which we lose in the English. This was part of the New Covenant with them. They were to be sharers in His glory, as they had been in His afflictions. The latter clause, "as the Father hath appointed unto Me," conveys the thought that His throne also was bestowed on the fulfilment of like conditions. The "sufferings" came first, and then the glory (1 Pet. i. 11). He was to endure the cross before He entered into joy (Heb. xii. 2). The Name that is above every name was the crowning reward of obedient humility (Phil. ii. 8, 9).

(30) **That ye may eat and drink at my table.**—The promise is the same as that implied in what had been already said in verse 16.

**And sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**—See Note on Matt. xix. 28. The repetition of the promise at the moment when apparent failure was close at hand, is significant as carrying the words into a higher region of symbolic meaning. Not on any thrones of earth were those disciples to sit, any more than the Master was to sit and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.[a] (31) And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you,[b] that he may sift *you* as wheat: (32) but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. (33) And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. (34) And he said,[c] I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me. (35) And he said unto them,[d] When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. (36) Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take *it*, and likewise *his* scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. (37) For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors:[e] for the things concerning me have an end. (38) And they said, Lord, behold, here *are* two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

[d] Matt. 10. 9.

[a] Matt. 19. 28.

[b] 1 Pet. 5. 8.

[e] Isa. 53. 12.

[c] Matt. 26. 34.

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on the throne of His father David in an earthly Jerusalem.

(31) **And the Lord said, Simon, Simon.**—The first three Gospels agree in placing the warning to Peter after the institution of the Lord's Supper. The two-fold utterance of the name, as in the case of Martha (chap. x. 41), is significant of the emphasis of sadness.

**Satan hath desired to have you.**—Both this verb, and the "I have prayed," are in the Greek tense which indicates an act thought of as belonging entirely to the past. The Lord speaks as though He had taken part in some scene like that in the opening of Job (i. 6—12; ii. 1—6), or that which had come in vision before the prophet Zechariah (iii. 1—5), and had prevailed by His intercession against the Tempter and Accuser.

**That he may sift you as wheat.**—The word and the figure are peculiar to St. Luke's record. The main idea is, however, the same as that of the winnowing fan in Matt. iii. 12; the word for "sift" implying a like process working on a smaller scale. The word for "you" is plural. The fiery trial by which the wheat was to be separated from the chaff was to embrace the whole company of the disciples as a body. There is a latent encouragement in the very word chosen. They were "to be sifted as *wheat.*" The good grain was there. They were not altogether as the chaff.

(32) **I have prayed for thee.**—The individualising pronoun is significant as indicating to the Apostle, who was most confident, it may be, of his claim to greatness, that he, of the whole company of the Twelve, was in the greatest danger. In the Greek the other pronoun also is emphatic. "It was *I* who prayed for thee." The prayer was answered, and the words that follow assume the answer as certain. In one sense "faith" did "fail" when the disciple denied his Lord; but repentance came after it, and a new power was gained through that weakness to make others strong. The word for "strengthen" does not meet us in the other Gospels, but is used frequently by St. Paul (Rom. i. 11; 1 Thess. iii. 2, *et al.*), and twice by St. Peter himself (1 Pet. v. 10 2 Pet. i. 12).

(33) **Lord, I am ready to go with thee.**—There is something like a latent tone of indignation as well as devotion. The disciple half-resented the thought that a special prayer should be necessary for him. Here, again, the Greek order of the words is more emphatic than the English, "With *Thee* am I ready . . ."

(34) **I tell thee, Peter.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 34, 35; Mark xiv. 30, 31.

(35) **When I sent you without purse, and scrip.**—The words refer specially to the command given to the disciples in chap. x. 4; Matt. x. 9, 10. The whole incident is peculiar to St. Luke. The appeal to their past experience is interesting as showing that on their first mission they were welcomed by those who heard them, and received food and shelter that met all their wants.

(36) **He that hath a purse, let him take it.**—The word for "purse" is the same as in chap. x. 4, where see Note. On "scrip," see Note on Matt. x. 10. If the words had stopped short of the "sword," we could have received their literal meaning without difficulty. They would have seemed to counsel the prudence which provides for want, instead of a simple trust, as before, in the providence of God, and so would have sanctioned all equitable forms of Church organisation and endowment. The mention of the "sword," however, introduces a new element of thought. Our Lord's words to Peter (Matt. xxvi. 52) show that the disciples were not meant to use it in His defence. It is not likely that He would teach them to use it in their own, as they preached the gospel of the Kingdom. True teachers felt afterwards that the weapons of their warfare were not carnal (2 Cor. x. 4). What follows supplies a probable explanation. The Master knew that two of the disciples (Peter and another) had brought swords with them, and with that acceptance of the thoughts of others which we have so often traced, He sadly, and yet, as it were, with the gentle sympathy with which a man speaks to those who are children in age or character, conveyed His warnings in the form which met their fears and hopes. If they meant to trust in swords, a time was coming when they would sorely need them.

(37) **And he was reckoned among the transgressors.**—Literally, *the lawless ones*, or, *breakers of the law.* The distinct reference to the words of Isa. liii. 12 is remarkable as showing that the picture of the righteous sufferer in that chapter had all along been present, if we may so speak, to our Lord's thoughts as that which He Himself had to realise. It was, as it were, a hint given to the disciples before the Passion, that they might learn, when it came, that it was part of the divine purpose that the Christ should so suffer; not singled out for the honour of a martyr's death, but hurried as a malefactor, with other malefactors, to the death of the rebel or the robber.

(38) **Behold, here are two swords.**—Peter, we find, had one (John xviii. 10); we can only conjecture who had the other. Possibly, Andrew; possibly, one of "the sons of thunder."

(39) And he came out,[a] and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. (40) And when he was at the place,[b] he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. (41) And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, (42) saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. (43) And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. (44) And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. (45) And when he arose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow, (46) and said unto them, Why

[a] Matt. 26. 36.

[b] Matt. 26. 41.

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**It is enough.**—Here again there is a touch of grave irony. The "two swords" were enough, and more than enough, for Him who did not mean them to use the swords at all. The word for "enough" may be noted as used far more often by St. Luke than in the other Gospels. The mystical interpretation which sees in the two swords the symbol of the spiritual and temporal authority committed to St. Peter, and to the Pope as his successor, stands on a level with that which finds the relations of the Church and the State foreshadowed in the "two great lights" of Gen. i. 16. Both are simply the dreams of a diseased fancy, and find their fit home at last in the limbo of vanities.

(39) **And went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives.**—The words agree with the previous statement in chap. xxi. 37, and with John xviii. 2. Here, as in the parallel passage of Matt. xxvi. 30 (where see Note), we have to insert the discourses of John xiv.—xvii.

(40—46) **When he was at the place.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 36—46; Mark xiv. 32—38. It is noticeable that St. Luke neither gives the name Gethsemane, nor describes it as "a garden." It is with him simply "*the* place" to which our Lord was wont to resort.

**Pray that ye enter not into temptation.**—The words are suggestive (1) as throwing light on the meaning of the "temptation" clause in the Lord's Prayer, which the disciples were now to use in all the fulness of its meaning; (2) as indicating that our Lord was Himself about to enter on a time of temptation, to which He was called, and from which He would not shrink. And yet even He, too, as the sequel shows, could utter a prayer which was in substance identical with that which He taught the disciples to use.

(41) **About a stone's cast.**—The descriptive touch, implying a report coming directly or indirectly from an eye-witness, is peculiar to St. Luke.

**Kneeled down, and prayed.**—Literally, *and was praying.* The tense of the latter verb implies continuous and sustained prayer.

(42) **Not my will, but thine, be done.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 39. Here there is a more distinct echo of the prayer which He had taught His disciples. He, too, could say, "Lead us not into temptation," but that prayer was subject, now explicitly, as at all times implicitly, to the antecedent condition that it was in harmony with "Thy will be done."

(43) **There appeared an angel unto him from heaven.**—This and the following verses are omitted by not a few of the best MSS., but the balance of evidence is, on the whole, in their favour. Assuming their truth as part of the Gospel, we ask—(1) How came the fact to be known to St. Luke, when St. Matthew and St. Mark had made no mention of it? and (2) What is the precise nature of the fact narrated? As regards (2), it may be noted that the angel is said to have "appeared to *him,*" to our Lord only, and not to the disciples. He was conscious of a new strength to endure even to the end. And that strength would show itself to others, to disciples who watched Him afar off, in a new expression and look, flashes of victorious strength and joy alternating with throbs and spasms of anguish. Whence could that strength come but from the messengers of His Father, in Whose presence, and in communion with Whom He habitually lived (Matt. iv. 11; John i. 51). The ministrations which had been with Him in His first temptation were now with Him in the last (Matt. iv. 11). As to (1) we may think of one of the disciples who were present having reported to the "devout women," from whom St. Luke probably, as we have seen, derived so much of the materials for his Gospel (see *Introduction*), that he had thus seen what seemed to him to admit of no other explanation.

(44) **And being in an agony.**—The Greek noun primarily describes a "conflict" or "struggle," rather than mere physical pain. The phenomenon described is obviously one which would have a special interest for one of St. Luke's calling, and the four words which he uses for "agony," "drops," "sweat," "more earnestly" (literally, *more intensely*), though not exclusively technical, are yet such as a medical writer would naturally use. They do not occur elsewhere in the New Testament. The form of the expression, "*as it were,* great drops (better, *clots*) of blood," leaves us uncertain, as the same Greek word does in "descending *like* a dove," in Matt. iii. 16, whether it applies to manner or to visible appearance. On the latter, and generally received view, the phenomenon is not unparalleled, both in ancient and modern times. (Comp. the very term, "bloody sweat," noted as a symptom of extreme exhaustion in Aristotle, *Hist. Anim.* iii. 19, and *Medical Gazette* for December, 1848, quoted by Alford.) If we ask who were St. Luke's informants, we may think either, as before, of one of the disciples, or, possibly, one of the women from whom, as above, he manifestly derived so much that he records. That "bloody sweat" must have left its traces upon the tunic that our Lord wore, and when the soldiers cast lots for it (Matt. xxvii. 35; John xix. 24), Mary Magdalene, who stood by the cross, may have seen and noticed the fact (John xix. 25), nor could it well have escaped the notice of Nicodemus and Joseph when they embalmed the body (John xix. 40).

(45) **He found them sleeping for sorrow.**—It is, perhaps, again characteristic of St. Luke, that while the other Gospels state simply the fact that the disciples slept, he assigns it psychologically and physiologically to its cause. Prolonged sorrow has, at last, a numbing and narcotising effect. (See Note on "believing not for joy," chap. xxiv. 41.)

(46) **Why sleep ye?**—St. Luke is here briefer than the other two records, and omits the three-fold prayer and warning, and the words, half-permissive and half of veiled reproof, which bade the disciples at last to "sleep on and take their rest."

sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

(47) And while he yet spake, behold a multitude,[a] and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him. (48) But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? (49) When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

(50) And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. (51) And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him. (52) Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves? (53) When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

(54) Then took they him,[b] and led *him*, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off. (55) And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall,[c] and were set down together, Peter sat down among them. (56) But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him. (57) And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not. (58) And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not. (59) And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this *fellow* also was with him: for he is a Galilæan. (60) And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou

[a] Matt 26. 47.
[b] Matt. 26. 57.
[c] Matt. 26. 69.

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(47—49) **And while he yet spake.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 47—50; Mark xiv. 43—46.

**Went before them.**—The tense implies, not that Judas then left those with whom he had walked before, but that he was seen walking, as he had been all along, in advance of the others. He was "guide to them that took Jesus" (Acts i. 16).

(48) **Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man?**—The first three Gospels all record the Traitor's kiss. St. Luke alone reports the question. In our Lord's use of the words, "the Son of Man," we may trace a two-fold purpose. It was the old familiar title by which He had been wont to speak of Himself in converse with the disciples, and so it appealed to memory and conscience. It was the name which was specially connected with His office as Judge and King (Dan. vii. 13), and so it came as a warning of the terrible retribution which the Traitor was preparing for himself.

(49) **When they which were about him.**—The phrase is apparently chosen as more accurate than "the disciples" would have been. Those who spoke were probably the three that had been nearest to Him, and possibly one or two others who had rushed forward.

(50—53) **And one of them.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 52—56; Mark xiv. 47—49. It will be remembered that all the four Gospels relate the incident, but that St. John alone gives the name of the disciple. It is possibly characteristic of St. Luke's technical accuracy that he uses the diminutive form of "ear," as if part only were cut off. In Deut. xv. 17 it seems to be applied specially to the fleshy lobe of the ear.

(51) **Suffer ye thus far.**—The words and the incident are peculiar to St. Luke. We are not told to whom the words were spoken. If to the disciples, they were a command to be patient, and to let things take their course. If, as is possible, to the servants and officers, they were a plea for His disciples—"Do not visit them with punishment for this one act." The immediate healing of the ear is in favour of the latter view, as tending to conciliation.

(52) **Then Jesus said unto the chief priests.**—St. Luke stands alone in recording the presence of the men of higher rank with the officers and multitude. On the "captains of the Temple," see Note on verse 4.

**As against a thief, with swords and staves.**—Better, *as against a robber*, and *with swords and clubs.* (See Note on Matt. xxvi. 55.)

(53) **This is your hour, and the power of darkness.**—The words are peculiar to St. Luke in this connection, but they present a point of coincidence, (1) as regards the phrase, with St. Paul (Col. i. 13); and (2) as regards the thought, with St. John (xiv. 30). In identifying the power that worked through human instruments against Him with darkness, our Lord virtually claims to be Himself the Light (John viii. 12).

(54—62) **Then took they him.**—See Notes on Matt. xvi. 57, 58, 69—75; Mark xiv. 53—72. Peter's following "afar off" may be noted as a feature common to the first three Gospels.

(55) **When they had kindled a fire.**—The fire is mentioned by St. Luke in common with St. Mark and St. John.

**Of the hall.**—Better, *of the court-yard*—"hall" with us conveying the idea of a covered space inside the house.

(56) **As he sat by the fire.**—Literally, *by the light*, or *blaze*, as in Mark xiv. 54.

**Earnestly looked upon him.**—The verb and adverb are both expressed by St. Luke's characteristic word. (See Note on chap. iv. 20.)

**This man was also with him.**—Minute as the coincidence is, it is interesting to note that it is through St. John's narrative that we get the explanation of the "also." St. John had been already seen and known as a disciple of Jesus (John xviii. 15).

(58) **Man.**—The noun so used in the vocative always implies a certain touch of anger or impatience. (See Note on chap. xii. 14.)

(59) **About the space of one hour after.**—Literally, *about one hour having intervened*, the verb so rendered being peculiar to St. Luke in the New Testament (chap. xxiv. 51; Acts xxvii. 28).

sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. (61) And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. (62) And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

(63) And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote *him.* (64) And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that smote thee? (65) And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.

(66) And as soon as it was day,[a] the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying, (67) Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: (68) and if I also ask *you,* ye will not answer me, nor let *me* go. (69) Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. (70) Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.[b] (71) And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

[b] Mark 14. 62.

A.D. 33.

[a] Matt. 27. 1.

CHAPTER XXIII. — (1) And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. (2) And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this *fellow* perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying

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**Confidently affirmed.**—This word also is peculiar to St. Luke (Acts xii. 15).

(61) **And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter.**—The glance which was thus the turning point of Peter's life, is mentioned only by St. Luke. As he was sitting in the porch, our Lord must have looked on the disciple as He was being led from Annas to the more public trial before the Sanhedrin. The form in which the fact is narrated, "*the Lord* turned," points, probably, as in other instances, to its having been gathered by St. Luke from his informants at a time when that mode of naming Him had become habitual; and possibly in answer to inquiries, natural in one who sought to analyse the motives that led to action, as to what had brought about the change that led Peter, as in a moment, from the curses of denial to the tears of penitence.

(63–73) **And the men that held Jesus . . .**—See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 59—68; Mark xiv. 55—65. The verbs "mocked" and "smote" are both in the tense that implies continued action.

(64) **Prophesy, who is it that smote thee?**—On the popular view of the lower form of Judaism that identified prophecy with clairvoyance, see Note. on Matt. xxvi. 68.

(66–71) **And as soon as it was day.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 11—14; Mark xv. 2—5. The special mention of the hour, though agreeing with what is implied in the other Gospels, is peculiar to St. Luke.

**The elders of the people.**—Literally, *the presbytery of the people.* St. Luke uses here, and in Acts xxii. 5, the collective singular noun, instead of the masculine plural. St. Paul uses it of the assembly of the elders of the Church, in 1 Tim. iv. 14.

(67) **Art thou the Christ?**—St. Luke passes over the earlier stages of the trial, the false-witnesses that did not agree, the charge of threatening to destroy the Temple, and the silence of Jesus until solemnly adjured.

**If I tell you, ye will not believe.**—The answer is reported only by St. Luke. It is interpreted by what we find in St. John. Our Lord had told them (John viii. 58; x. 30), and they had not believed.

(68) **Ye will not answer me, nor let me go.**—The last clause is omitted by the best MSS. The first clearly refers to the question which He had so recently put to priests and scribes, whether the Christ was the son of David only, or also the Lord of David; and which they had been unable to answer (Matt. xxii. 41—46). The words were accordingly an indirect protest against their claim to question Him, when they had proved themselves impotent to solve a primary problem as to the being and character of the Messiah.

(69) **Hereafter shall the Son of man sit.**—Literally, *From this time forth shall the Son of Man be sitting.* In St. Luke's shorter record the immediate sequence of this confession upon an apparent refusal to answer seems hardly consistent. The narrative of St. Matthew shows that the change of purpose or of action was caused by the solemn adjuration of the high priest, which no longer left Him the alternative of silence. The form of the answer, too, is somewhat altered. Not "ye shall see," but simply "shall be sitting," as though the dominant thought in St. Luke's mind in reporting the words was that even in the agony and death that were so soon to come on Him, our Lord found Himself glorified (John xii. 23). The Cross was His Throne, and while hanging on it, He was in spirit sitting at the right hand of the Father.

(70) **Ye say that I am.**—The question, as asked by the whole company of priests and elders, is given only by St. Luke. It apparently followed, as a spontaneous cry of indignant horror, on the answer which had been made to the adjuration of the high priest. The answer is complete in itself; but it implies, as in the less ambiguous forms in St. Matthew and St. Mark, the confession that He actually was what they had asked Him. The "I am" has something of the same significance as in John vii. 24, 25; viii. 58 (where see Notes),

### XXIII.

(1–5) **And the whole multitude of them arose.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 11—14; Mark xv. 2—5.

(2) **Perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute . . .**—St. Luke's report of the accusation is more definite than that in the other Gospels. The question asked in chap. xx. 20—26, was obviously intended to lead up to this; and though then baffled by our Lord's answer, the priests now brought, backed by false witnesses, the charge for which they had hoped to find evidence in His own words. It seems probable

that he himself is Christ a King. (3) And Pilate asked him,[a] saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest *it.* (4) Then said Pilate to the chief priests and *to* the people, I find no fault in this man. (5) And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place. (6) When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilæan. (7) And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time.

(8) And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long *season,* because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. (9) Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing. (10) And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him. (11) And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked *him,* and arrayed him in a

[a] Matt. 27. 11.

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that these facts came to the writer's knowledge in the same way as those that immediately follow. (See Note on verse 6.) It may be noted that the charge in the Greek is slightly enlarged. The question had referred, as reported by St. Matthew and St. Mark, to one form of tribute—the *census,* or poll-tax. The charge speaks of "taxes" in the plural, and uses the most general words. In Luke xx. 22 the same word is used as in this verse, but in the singular. St. Paul, in a passage which may well have been based upon St. Luke's report of our Lord's words, uses the same term as St. Luke (Rom. xiii. 6, 7), first generically in the plural, and then in the singular as contrasted with customs duties.

(3) **Thou sayest it.**—Here, as in verse 70 and Matt. xxvi. 64, the formula is one of confession. The fuller narrative of St. John should be compared throughout.

(4) **I find no fault in this man.**—The Greek term for "fault" is somewhat more technical than the English, and is almost equivalent to what we call the "count" of an indictment. It may be noted that, as far as the New Testament is concerned, it is peculiar to St. Luke, in this chapter and in Acts xx. 40.

(5) **Teaching throughout all Jewry.**—This is one of the few passages in which the old English equivalent for Judæa retains its place in the Authorised version (Dan. v. 13); in the Prayer Book version of the Psalms, from the Great Bible (see *Introduction*), we find it in Ps. lxxvi. 1. Traces of the general use of the word remain in Shakespeare's way of speaking of "Herod of Jewry," and in the Old Jewry as the name of the Jews' quarter in ancient London. The charge of "beginning from Galilee" probably rested upon the crowds that had followed Him on His last journey to Jerusalem.

(6) **When Pilate heard of Galilee.**—The incident that follows is peculiar to St. Luke, and may have been obtained by him from Manaen or other persons connected with the Herodian household with whom he appears to have come in contact. (See *Introduction.*) It is obvious that Pilate catches at the word in the hope of shifting on another the responsibility of condemning One whom he believed to be innocent and had learnt to respect, while yet he had not the courage to acquit Him.

(7) **Unto Herod's jurisdiction.**—The word is the same as that commonly translated "authority," but the English exactly expresses its meaning here.

**Who himself also was at Jerusalem.**—It was, of course, no strange thing that the Tetrarch of Galilee, professing Judaism, should come up to keep the Passover in the Holy City. And it is clear that he kept a kind of court there, had his so-called Herodian Rabbis with him (see Notes on Mark iii. 6, xii. 13), and was attended by his troops (verse 11). Up to this time he had remained in sullen seclusion, and no visits of courtesy had been exchanged between him and Pilate.

(8) **He was desirous to see him of a long season.**—The vague feeling of wonder had begun soon after the death of the Baptist. (See Notes on Matt. xiv. 2; Mark vi. 14.) It had its beginning in hearing of wonders; it ended in a desire to see one. It was mingled, possibly, with a feeling of bitter enmity which no miracle could remove. (See Note on chap. xiii. 31.)

(9) **He answered him nothing.**—We can hardly help asking ourselves what were likely to have been among Herod's questions. Did the Prisoner who stood before him really claim to be a King? Did He proclaim Himself as the Christ? Was He John the Baptist, risen from the dead? If not, who and what were his earthly parents? The unbroken silence of the Accused must have been strangely impressive at the time, and is singularly suggestive when we remember how He had answered Caiaphas when He had been adjured in the name of the living God. He had spoken to Pilate in the tones of a sad gentleness (John xix. 33—37). To Herod alone, the incestuous adulterer, the murderer of the Forerunner, He does not vouchsafe, from first to last, to utter a single syllable.

(10) **The chief priests and scribes.**—The accusers seem to have accompanied the Accused. There was nothing strange in the presence of the Sadducean members of the higher priestly order, always courting the favour of the powerful, at the court of the Tetrarch. Among the scribes may have been some of the Herodian section (see Notes on Matt. xxii. 16), who were likely to gain a hearing there, and had probably come up with their prince from Galilee.

(11) **Herod with his men of war.** — Better, perhaps, *troops,* or *soldiers.* The word is the same as that translated "armies" in Matt. xxii. 7, Acts xxiii. 27; "soldiers" in Acts xxiii. 10.

**Arrayed him in a gorgeous robe.**—Literally, *bright.* The word is used of the angel's garment, in Acts x. 30; of fine linen, in Rev. xv. 6, xviii. 4; of crystal, in Rev. xxii. 1; of a star, in Rev. xxii. 16. It may have been such as Josephus describes Herod Agrippa as wearing, in the incident which he records (*Ant.* xix. 8, § 4) in common with Acts xii. 21—a robe of white tissue of some kind richly embroidered with silver. We may, perhaps, venture to trace in the outrage, a vindictive retaliation for the words which the Prophet gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.

(12) And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves.

(13) And Pilate,[a] when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, (14) said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined *him* before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: (15) no, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him. (16) I will therefore chastise him, and release *him.* (17) (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.) (18) And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this *man*, and release unto us Barabbas: (19) (who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.) (20) Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them. (21) But they cried, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify him. (22) And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let *him* go. (23) And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. (24) And Pilate gave sentence[1] that it should be as they required. (25) And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will. (26) And as they led him away,[b] they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear *it* after Jesus.

(27) And there followed him a great

[a] Matt. 27. 23.

[1] Or, *assented.*

[b] Matt. 27. 32.

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had once spoken of those who were "gorgeously apparelled." (See Notes on Matt. xi. 8; Luke vii. 25.)

(12) **Before they were at enmity between themselves.**—The special cause of enmity is not known. Possibly the massacre of the Galileans, mentioned in chap. xiii. 1, may have had somewhat to do with it. The union of the two in their enmity against Jesus, though not mentioned in the Gospels, is referred to in the first recorded hymn of the Church of Christ (Acts iv. 27). Herod, however, it will be noted, passes no formal sentence. He is satisfied with Pilate's mark of respect for his jurisdiction.

(13—23) **And Pilate, when he had called together . . .**—See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 15—23; Mark xv. 6—14. The first summons to the members of the Council, and the reference to Herod's examination of the Prisoner are, as the sequel of the previous incident, peculiar to St. Luke.

(15) **I sent you to him.**—The better MSS. give, "he sent him back to us."

**Nothing worthy of death is done unto him.**—Better, *is done by Him.* The translators appear to have mistaken the construction, and to have taken the words as meaning "nothing worthy of death has been done to—*i.e.*, against—Herod." The error is common to all the English versions.

(16) **I will therefore chastise him.**—The primary meaning of the word was to correct as children are corrected, thence to use the rod, as in Prov. xix. 18; xxix. 17. As used here it implied the Roman punishment of scourging. Pilate was here, as throughout, halting between two opinions, convinced of the innocence of the Accused, yet afraid to oppose the people. Would it not be enough, he thought, that they should see Him treated as guilty of a minor offence? Would they not accept His release as part of the ceremonial of the day?

(17) **For of necessity he must release one unto them.**—Literally, *he had a necessity.* The better MSS. are singularly divided as to this verse. Most omit it altogether. One, followed by some of the versions, has it after verse 19. It would seem probable from these facts that the narrative was originally written without it, that it was then felt that the release of Barabbas required an explanation, and that a note was first added in the margin, either by a transcriber or by the writer himself in a duplicate copy, and then found its way into the text. The precise form of the phrase, to "have a necessity," is not found in the other Gospels, but is common to St. Luke (xi. 18 and here), and St. Paul (1 Cor. vii. 37). It is found also in Heb. vii. 27; Jude verse 3. On the practice thus described, see Note on Matt. xxvii. 15.

(19) **Who for a certain sedition.**—St. Luke's and St. Mark's accounts agree more closely than the others. St. John alone speaks of Barabbas as a "robber;" St. Matthew merely calls him a "notable prisoner."

(23) **They were instant.**—Literally, *they pressed upon Him.* As the adjective is almost passing into the list of obsolescent words, it may be well to remind the reader that it has the force of "urgent." So we have "instant in prayer" (Rom. xii. 12), "be instant in season, out of season" (2 Tim. iv. 2).

**And of the chief priests.**—The words are omitted in many of the best MSS.

(24—28) **And Pilate gave sentence.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 24—30; Mark xv. 15—19. St. Luke's account is here the briefest of the four, St. John's by far the fullest. Here we read nothing of the outrages of Pilate's troops, the purple robe, and the crown of thorns. The omissions are significant, in conjunction with that which is peculiar to him, as pointing to the sources of his information. Those who were present at Herod's court were not likely to know fully what was passing in the Prætorium.

(25) **Whom they had desired.**—Better, *whom they were asking for.* The tense is imperfect, not pluperfect, and implies that the cries were still continuing.

(27) **A great company of people, and of women.**—Here, again, we come across a characteristic

company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. (28) But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. (29) For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed *are* the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. (30) Then shall they begin to say to the mountains,[a] Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. (31) For if they do these things in a green tree,[b] what shall be done in the dry? (32) And there were also two other,[c] malefactors, led with him to be put to death. (33) And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary,[1] there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

(34) Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. (35) And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided *him*, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ,

[a] Isa. 2. 19; Hos. 10. 8; Rev. 6. 16.

[b] 1 Pet. 4. 17.

[c] Matt. 27. 38.

[1] Or, *The place of a skull.*

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incident peculiar to St. Luke, and obviously derived from the devout women to whom we have traced so many facts which he alone records. (See *Introduction.*) "Daughters of Jerusalem" were there, as our Lord's words show—perhaps one of the sisterhoods which were formed in that city for mitigating the sufferings of condemned criminals by narcotic drinks (Deutsch. *Remains*, p. 38)—and among these may have been Mary and Martha, but verse 49 implies the presence of women from Galilee also. The wailing was loud and bitter, for they, we may believe, had cherished, even more fondly than the disciples, the thought that "the kingdom of God should immediately appear" (chap. xix. 11).

(28) **Daughters of Jerusalem.**—It is characteristic of the tenderness of our Lord's sympathy that these were the first words recorded as coming from His lips after He left the presence of Pilate. The mocking, the scourging, the spitting, had all been borne in silence. Now He speaks, and His thoughts are of the far-off sufferings of others, rather than of those that were then falling upon Himself.

(29) **Blessed are the barren.**—We must enter into all the passionate desire of Israelite women for offspring, as we see it, *e.g.*, in Rachel (Gen. xxx. 1) and in Hannah (1 Sam. i. 10, 11), in order to estimate the strangeness of such a beatitude. With some of those who heard it, its force may have been emphasised by its contrast between it and the blessing which had been once uttered by a woman who may, perhaps, have been one of them (chap. xi. 27).

(30) **Then shall they begin to say to the mountains.**—The imagery was natural in a limestone country such as Judæa, subject to earthquakes. Commonly, such catastrophes were dreaded, and men prayed against them. The time was coming when the dens and caves which usually offered a place of refuge from invading armies (Isa. ii. 19) would prove insufficient, and men would cry, as they had done of old (comp. Hos. x. 8, from which the words are quoted), to the mountains to fall on them.

(31) **If they do these things in a green tree.**—The word for "tree" primarily meant "wood" or "timber," the tree cut down. In later Greek, however, as, *e.g.*, in Rev. ii. 7; xxii. 2, 14, 19, it was used for "tree." The "green tree" is, therefore, that which is yet living, capable of bearing fruit; the "dry," that which is barren, fruitless, withered, fit only for the axe (Matt. iii. 10; Luke xiii. 7). The words have so much the character of a proverb that the verb may almost be treated as practically impersonal. So far as any persons are implied, we must think of our Lord as speaking of the representatives of Roman power. If Pilate could thus sentence to death One in whom he acknowledged that he could find no fault, what might be expected from his successors when they had to deal with a people rebellious and in arms? In 1 Pet. iv. 17 we have the same thought in a more general and less figurative form.

(33) **The place, which is called Calvary.**—On the place and name, see Note on Matt. xxvii. 33. As a matter of translation, it would clearly have been better either to give the Greek form (*Cranion*), or its meaning (= "skull") in English. The Vulgate, however, had given *Calvarium*, and that word had taken so strong a hold on men's minds, that it was apparently thought better, as in all the English versions, to retain it here. It is not without interest to note that the name which more than any other is associated with Protestant hymns and meditations on the atonement, should come to us from the Vulgate of the Latin Church.

(34) **Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.**—Again, the silence is broken, not by the cry of anguish or sigh of passionate complaint, but by words of tenderest pity and intercession. It is well, however, that we should remember who were the primary direct objects of that prayer. Not Pilate, for he knew that he had condemned the innocent; not the chief priests and scribes, for their sin, too, was against light and knowledge. Those for whom our Lord then prayed were clearly the soldiers who nailed Him to the cross, to whom the work was but that which they were, as they deemed, bound to do as part of their duty. It is, however, legitimate to think of His intercession as including, in its ultimate extension, all who in any measure sin against God as not knowing what they do, who speak or act against the Son of Man without being guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost. (See Note on Acts iii. 17.)

(35) **And the rulers also with them derided him.**—St. Luke uses the generic term for the members of the Sanhedrin, whom St. Matthew particularises as "chief priests, scribes, and elders." The verb is the same as in xvi. 14, and implies the curled lip and distended nostril of scorn.

**He saved others.**—The words were, like those of Caiaphas (John xi. 50), an unconscious prophecy, in part also an admission of the work that He had done, as in the case of Lazarus, in rescuing others from the power of death.

**If he be Christ, the chosen of God.**—It may be noted that this is the only passage in the New Testament in which the adjective "chosen," or "elect," the chosen of God. (36) And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, (37) and saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. (38) And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

(39) And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. (40) But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? (41) And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. (42) And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. (43) And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

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is directly applied to Christ. The participle of the verb, is, however, found in the better MSS. of chap. ix. 35, and the adjective is used of Him as the "stone, elect and precious," in 1 Pet. ii. 6.

(36) **Offering him vinegar.**—Not even the prayer for their forgiveness had touched the hearts of the soldiers. But still, they knew not what they did, and did but follow, after their nature, in the path in which others led the way. Possibly too, rude as their natures were, there was a touch of rough kindliness mingling in their mockery, as shown in the offer of the vinegar, or sour wine, which they had brought for their own use (see Note on Matt. xxvii. 48)—unless, indeed, we suppose the refinement of cruelty which held it before the eyes of the Sufferer, but did not, as afterwards, convey it to His lips.

(38) **And a superscription.**—See Note on Matt. xxvii. 38.

(39) **And one of the malefactors.**—The incident that follows is singularly characteristic of St. Luke. If we ask how he came to know what the other Gospels pass over, we may, I think, find his probable informants once more in the devout women who followed Jesus to the place of Crucifixion, and who stood near enough to the cross to hear what was then spoken. The word for "hanged" is used by St. Luke (Acts v. 30, x. 39) and St. Paul (Gal. iii. 13) as applied to crucifixion.

**Railed on him.**—Literally, *was blaspheming*, but in the sense in which that word signifies the "reviling" of which man, and not God, may be the object. He, too, catches up the taunt of the rulers and the soldiers.

(40) **But the other answering rebuked him.**—On the legends connected with the penitent thief, see Notes on Matt. xxvii. 44. Dysmas, or Titus, as they name him, had once before looked on the face of the Christ. He had been one of a band of robbers that attacked the holy travellers in their flight from Bethlehem, and had then pleaded for their lives. The Virgin Mother had blessed him. The child Christ had foretold his suffering and his repentance. Now, as he gazed on the face of the divine Sufferer, he recognised the features of the infant Jesus (*Gosp. of Infancy*, viii. 1—8; *Gosp. of Nicodemus*, i. 10). Confining ourselves to what St. Luke records, we may think of him as impressed by the holiness and patience of Him he looked on. What such a One claimed to be, that He must have a right to claim, and so the very words uttered in mockery, "Christ, the King of Israel," became an element in his conversion. This, of course, implies that he cherished Messianic hopes of some kind, if only of the vague nature then common among his people. Yet deeper in the ground-work of his character there must have been the fear of God, the reverence and awe rising out of a sense of sin, the absence of which he noted in his companion. He accepted his punishment as just, and in so doing made it reformatory and not simply penal.

(41) **This man hath done nothing amiss.**—The confident assertion may have rested on previous knowledge of our Lord's life and character, or on some report that had reached him on his way to Golgotha, or on Pilate's confession that he found no fault in Him.

(42) **Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.**—More accurately, *in Thy kingdom.* There is something singularly touching in the trust implied in the form of the appeal. He asks for no special boon, no place on the right hand or on the left; no room in the King's palace. He is content not to be forgotten, certain that if the King remember him at all, it will be with thoughts of tenderness and pity.

(43) **To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.**—We have first to consider the word, then the thought expressed by it. The former first appears as a Persian word applied to land enclosed as a park or garden for a king or satrap. As such it meets us often in Xenophon's *Anabasis* (i. 2, § 7; 4, § 9, *et al.*). Finding it so used, the LXX. translators used it in Song of Sol. iv. 13; Eccles. ii. 5; Neh. ii. 8, and, above all, in Gen. ii. 15, taking what we treat as a proper name as a description, and giving "the Paradise of Delight" for "the Garden of Eden." In the figurative language in which the current Jewish belief clothed its thoughts of the unseen world, the Garden of Eden took its place side by side with "Abraham's bosom," as a synonym for the eternal blessedness of the righteous, presenting a vivid contrast to the foul horrors of Gehenna. It is remarkable, however, that this is the one occasion on which the word appears as part of our Lord's teaching. In the mystical language of the Apocalypse, "the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God," is one of the promises to "him that overcometh" (Rev. ii. 7). St. Paul speaks of himself as having been caught up in ecstasy and vision into "paradise" (2 Cor. xii. 4). In this instance we may trace in our Lord's use of the word a subtle tenderness of sympathy. What He said in answer to the penitent's prayer was, in part, a contrast to it, in part, its most complete fulfilment. Not in the far-off "Coming," but that very day; not "remembered" only, but in closest companionship; not in the tumult and battle which his thoughts had connected with the Kingdom, but in the fair garden, with its green lawns and still waters, its trees of Knowledge and of Life. No picture could meet the cravings of the tortured robber more completely than that; none, probably, could be more different from his expectations. Yet the "paradise" of Eastern lands was essentially the kingly garden, that of which the palace was the centre. The promise implied that the

(44) And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth[1] until the ninth hour. (45) And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.

(46) And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father,[a] into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. (47) Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. (48) And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned. (49) And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.

(50) And, behold, *there was* a man named Joseph,[b] a counsellor; *and he was* a good man, and a just: (51) (the same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) *he was* of Arimathæa, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. (52) This *man* went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. (53) And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. (54) And that day was the prepara-

[1] Or, *land.*

[a] Ps. 31. 5.

[b] Matt. 27. 57.

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penitent should enter at once into the highest joy of the Kingdom. Are we right in thinking that there was no fulfilment of the words till death had released the spirit from its thraldom? May there not even then have been an ineffable joy, such as made the flames of the fiery furnace to be as a "moist whistling wind" (Song of Three Childr. verse 27, in the *Apocrypha*), such as martyrs have in a thousand cases known, acting almost as a physical anæsthetic acts? The penitent thief is naturally prominent in the Apocryphal legends of our Lord's descent into Hades, seen by His side as He enters Paradise (*Gosp. of Nicodemus*, ii. 10).

(44—46) **And it was about the sixth hour.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 45—50; Mark xv. 33—37. We can only conjecturally account for the omission of the "ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI," so prominent in the other two reports; but it is at least conceivable, assuming the same sources of information as before, that the women who stood by the cross may have shrunk from repeating words so terrible, and have loved to dwell rather on those which seemed to them to speak, not of abandonment, but of an absolute and unshaken trust. It is remarkable that this, like the cry of apparent despair, is a quotation from the Psalms (Ps. xxxi. 6).

(46) **And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said . . .**—Better, *And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and said . . .* The English text emphasises too strongly the distinctness of the act, possibly with the implied suggestion that the cry might have consisted of the words which St. Luke does not report. On the other hand, the other Gospels make the "great cry" immediately precede death.

**He gave up the ghost.**—Better, *He expired*, or *breathed out His spirit*, the verb containing the root from which the Greek for "spirit" is derived. The Greek of St. John, which appears in English as though it were the same as St. Luke's, corresponds more closely to the final utterance, "He delivered up His spirit."

(47—49) **Now when the centurion saw what was done . . .**—See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 54, 55; Mark xv. 40—41. The phrase "glorified God" is, as has been noticed already (chap. v. 25), specially characteristic of St. Luke. The substitution of "this was a righteous man," for "this was the Son of God," may, perhaps, have originated in a wish to express the exact measure, and not more, of the sense in which the centurion had used the seemingly higher words.

(48) **To that sight.**—The word is used by St. Luke only in the New Testament, and exactly expresses the purpose of those who had come as to gaze on a "spectacle." These had probably taken little or no part in the insults and taunts of the priests, and now they went away awed, partly by the darkness, partly by the solemn majesty of that awful death.

**Smote their breasts, and returned.**—Better, *returned, smiting their breasts.* Both the verb and participle imply continuous action.

(49) **All his acquaintance.**—This is the only passage in which the word is used. St. Luke apparently employs it as intermediate between the spectators and the avowed disciples. Such may have been Simon, or Lazarus, of Bethany, or the rulers who believed yet did not confess, or the owners of the ass and of the colt, or the proprietor of the house in which the Passover had been eaten.

**The women that had followed him from Galilee.**—St. Luke does not name them as St. Matthew and St. Mark do, probably because in chap. viii. 2, 3, he had already given the names of the most prominent among them.

(50—56) **Behold, there was a man named Joseph.**—See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 57—61; Mark xv. 42—47. St. Luke agrees with St. Mark in calling him a "counsellor," but the epithets, "good man and just," are peculiar to him. The adjective for good is not often applied to persons in the New Testament. In Acts xi. 24 it is used of Barnabas; in Rom. v. 7 it represents a higher excellence than that of the man who is simply just.

(51) **The counsel and deed of them.**—The first word includes all the earlier stages of the action of the Sanhedrin, from the counsel given by Caiaphas (John xi. 49) to the final condemnation; the second, the unofficial acts, such as the compact with Judas, and the delivery to Pilate.

**Who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.**—The description agrees in form with St. Mark, but not with St. Matthew or St. John. Nicodemus, who acted with him, is mentioned in the fourth Gospel only.

(53) **A sepulchre that was hewn in stone.**—The descriptive word differs from that used by St. Matthew and St. Mark, as being slightly more technical, and implying a higher degree of finish.

(54) **That day was the preparation.**—See Note on Matt. xxvii. 52.

tion, and the sabbath drew on. (55) And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. (56) And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment.

CHAPTER XXIV.—(1) Now upon the first *day* of the week,[a] very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain *others* with them. (2) And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. (3) And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. (4) And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: (5) and as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living[1] among the dead?

A.D. 33.

[a] Matt. 28. 1.

[1] Or, *him that liveth.*

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**The sabbath drew on.**—Literally, *the Sabbath was dawning.* It is a question whether the word is used here of the actual beginning of the Sabbath—which was, of course, at sunset after the Crucifixion—or, as St. Matthew appears to use it (xxviii. 1), for the actual dawn. The later Rabbis appear to have spoken of the day "dawning" in the sense of its beginning at sunset, and so far support the former interpretation. It was possible, however, under the emergencies of the case, that the entombment began before the sunset, and may have been finished during the night, or that, in common speech and usage, the Sabbath, though theoretically beginning on Friday evening at sunset, was not practically recognised till Saturday at sunrise.

(55) **And the women also.**—Here again we come upon traces of St. Luke's informants. The other Gospels speak of one or two by name. He knows that others belonging to the company of women who came with Jesus from Galilee (note the recurrence of the same description as in verse 49) had taken part in the work. They had stood within view of the cross. They saw the body taken down. They followed (it was not far) to the garden owned by Nicodemus.

(56) **They returned, and prepared spices and ointments.**—This seems at first inconsistent with their "buying" spices after the Sabbath was over (chap. xxiv. 1). Possibly, we have two groups of women—the two Maries and "Joanna and the others" (chap. xxiv. 10)—taking part in the same work; possibly, what they did on the Friday afternoon or evening was not enough, and it was necessary to buy more spices as soon as shops were open on Saturday evening.

**Rested the sabbath day.**—It is noticeable that this is the only record in the Gospels of that memorable Sabbath. Can we picture to ourselves how it was spent by those who had taken part in the great drama of the previous day;—Caiaphas and the priests officiating in the Temple services of that day, after their hurried Passover, just in time to fulfil the bare letter of the law, on the previous afternoon; the crowds that had mocked and scoffed on Golgotha crowding the courts of the Temple, or attending in the synagogues of Hebrew or Hellenistic Jews; scribes and Pharisees preaching sermons on the history and meaning of the Passover, and connecting it with the hope of a fresh deliverance for Israel? And the disciples, where were they? scattered each to his own lodging, or meeting in the guest-chamber where they had eaten their Paschal supper, or, as that was apparently a new room to them (chap. xxii. 8, 9), in some other inn or lodging in the city, or its suburbs? On that Sabbath, John and Peter must have met, and the penitent must have found in his friend's love the pledge and earnest of his Lord's forgiveness; and the Twelve and the Seventy must, in groups of twos or threes, have mourned over the failure of their hopes; and the women have comforted themselves with the thought that they could at least show their reverence for the Lord they loved as they had never shown it before; and Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa have rested with satisfaction in the thought that they could honour a dead prophet without the danger that had attached to honouring a living one, or have reproached themselves for the cowardice which had kept them from any open confession till it was too late, and mourned over the irrevocable past. The records are silent, but the imagination which turns the dead chronicles of history into a living drama has here, within due limits, legitimate scope for action. May we go a step yet further, and think of what was then being accomplished behind the veil, of the descent into Hades and the triumph over Death, the soul of the robber in the rest of Paradise, and the good news proclaimed to "the spirits in prison" (1 Pet. iii. 19)? If we dare not fill up the gap with the legends of the Apocryphal Gospel that bears the name of Nicodemus, we may, at least, venture to dwell reverently on the hints that Scripture actually gives.

## XXIV.

(1–8) **Now upon the first day of the week.**—See Notes on Matt. xxviii. 1—4; Mark xvi. 1—4.

**Very early in the morning.**—The original has a more poetic form "in the deep dawn," agreeing with "while it was yet dark." The last clause, "certain others with them," is not found in the best MSS., and may have been inserted by transcribers to bring in the second group, who are named in the other Gospels, but not in this.

(2) **And they found the stone rolled away.**—The narrative is less vivid and detailed than St. Mark's; possibly, we may believe, because St. Luke's report may have come, not from one of the Maries, but from Joanna (named in verse 10), or Susanna, who were less prominent, and might only have heard of what had passed from others.

(4) **Two men stood by them.**—St. Mark and St. Matthew mention one only. Had St. Matthew given the two, it might have been urged by adverse critics that this duplication of phenomena, as in the case of the demoniacs (Matt. viii. 28), and the blind men at Jericho (Matt. xx. 30), was an idiosyncrasy of his. As it is, we must suppose that each set of informants—the two Maries, and the "others" from whom it seems probable that St. Luke's report was derived—described what they themselves had seen. At such moments of terror and astonishment, perception and memory are not always very definite in their reports.

(5) **Why seek ye the living among the dead?**—Better, as in the margin, *Him that liveth.* The

(6) He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,[a] (7) saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. (8) And they remembered his words, (9) and returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. (10) It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary *the mother* of James, and other *women that were* with them, which told these things unto the apostles. (11) And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not. (12) Then arose Peter,[b] and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

(13) And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus,[c] which was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs. (14) And they talked together of all these things which had happened. (15) And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together* and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. (16) But

[b] John 20. 6.

[a] Matt. 17. 23.

[c] Mark 16. 12.

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question was enough to change the whole current of their thoughts. The Lord whom they came to honour as dead was in very deed "living," was emphatically "He that liveth," alive for evermore (Rev. i. 18). The primary meaning of the words is, of course, limited to this; but like the parallel, "let the dead bury their dead" (see Note on Matt. viii. 22), they suggest manifold applications. It is in vain that we seek "Him that liveth" in dead works, dead formulæ, dead or dying institutions. The eternal life that is in Christ is not to be found by looking into the graves of the past in the world's history, or in those of our individual life. In both cases it is better to rise, as on the "stepping-stones of our dead selves," to "higher things."

(6) **Remember how he spake unto you.**—The direct appeal to the memory of the women is peculiar to St. Luke, and shows us what does not lie on the surface of the Gospel history, that they, too, were among those to whom were uttered the prophecies of the Passion and the Resurrection of which we read in chap. ix. 43—45. In the words of Matt. xxviii. 6, "He is risen, as He said," we have an indirect reference of the same character.

(7) **Into the hands of sinful men.**—The adjective does not appear in the earlier report. It is probably used here, more or less, in its popular Jewish meaning, as applied to "sinners of the Gentiles" (Gal. ii. 15).

(8) **And they remembered his words.**—It would be better to end the previous verse with a fullstop, and begin the next sentence, *And they returned* . . . .

(9—11) **To all the rest.**—So Matt. xxviii. 8 as to "the disciples," as a wider term than "Apostles." We may naturally think of many at least of the Seventy as being among the "rest."

(10) **Mary Magdalene, and Joanna.**—St. Luke alone names the latter in the Resurrection history, as he alone had named her before, as following our Lord in Galilee (chap. vii. 2). It is not an unreasonable inference from this that she was probably his chief informant.

(11) **Idle tales.**—The one Greek word which is thus rendered occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It is applied strictly to the trifling, half-idiotic babble of dotage.

(12) **Then arose Peter.**—See Notes on John xx. 3—10. The fact of Peter's visit to the sepulchre is common to St. Luke and St. John, but the former does not mention the companionship of the beloved disciple. On the assumption of Joanna being St. Luke's informant, we can understand that she told what she remembered, Peter's impetuous rush to the sepulchre, and did not notice that he was followed by his friend.

**Stooping down.**—The word was sometimes used alone, as in Jas. i. 25, 1 Pet. i. 12, for the act of stooping down to look.

(13) **And, behold, two of them.**—The long and singularly interesting narrative that follows is peculiar to St. Luke, and must be looked upon as among the "gleaning of the grapes," which rewarded his researches even after the full vintage had apparently been gathered in by others. The Emmaus in Galilee, about a mile from Tiberias, was famous for its medicinal warm springs (Jos. *Ant.* xviii. 2, § 3; *Wars*, iv. 1, § 3), and had the narrative referred to it, we might have supposed St. Luke to have visited it on that account. We have no record of any such springs in the Emmaus near Jerusalem, which is also named by Josephus (*Wars*, vii. 6, § 6) as at a distance of sixty *stadia*, or furlongs, from Jerusalem. The name, however, was probably, as Josephus states (as above), significant, connected with the modern Arabic term, *Hammâm*, or *Hummum*, for a "bath," and indicating, therefore, like the Latin "Aquæ," or the French "Aix," the presence of such springs, and if so, the same hypothesis may fit in here. In the case of the Emmaus (afterwards Nicopolis), in the plain of Philistia, there was a fountain mentioned by early writers as famous for its healing powers (Euseb. *Chron.* 41). We can hardly doubt, from the prominence given to the name of Cleopas, that he was St. Luke's informant. We are not told when the disciples started, but as it was "towards evening" when they reached Emmaus, it could not well have been before their noontide meal. The fulness with which the whole account is given may well lead us to think of it as taken down at the time from the lips of the narrator.

(15) **While they communed together . . .**—The verb is the same as that translated "talked" in the preceding verse.

**Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.**—Excluding, as we must do in such a case, the element of chance, we are left to conjecture the reasons for this special manifestation. Neither of the two travellers belonged to the Twelve. They may possibly have been of the number of the Seventy. May we think that it was in tender sympathy with the trials to which their thoughtful and yearning temper specially exposed them, that their Master thus drew near to them? They had cherished the hope that the kingdom of God would immediately appear (chap. xix. 11), and now it seemed further off than ever. And He came, partly, it may be, with altered garb and tone, partly as their eyes were holden that they should not know him. (17) And he said unto them, What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? (18) And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? (19) And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: (20) and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. (21) But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done. (22) Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; (23) and when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. (24) And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found *it* even so as the women had said: but him they saw not. (25) Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: (26) ought not

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holding their senses under supernatural control, so that they knew Him not. He was to them as a man of like passions with themselves. (Comp. the appearance to Mary Magdalene, John xx. 15.)

(17) **What manner of communications . . . ?**—Literally, *What are these words that ye bandy to and fro with one another?*

**And are sad.**—The adjective is the same as that used of the hypocrites in Matt. vi. 16. The better MSS. make the question stop at "as ye walk," and then add, "And they stood sad in countenance." Over and above the authority for this reading, it has unquestionably the merit of greater dramatic vividness.

(18) **One of them, whose name was Cleopas.**—The name is to be distinguished from the Clopas of John xix. 25, which was probably a Græcised form of the Aramaic name of a Galilean disciple. Here the name is a Greek contraction of Cleopatros (so Antipas, from Antipatros), and so far, as connected with Cleopatra, indicates Hellenistic and probably Alexandrian antecedents. This may in part, perhaps, account for his imparting to St. Luke what had not found its way into the current oral teaching of the Hebrew Church at Jerusalem, as embodied in the narratives of St. Matthew and St. Mark.

**Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem?**—The English is, at least, ambiguous. Better, *Art thou alone a sojourner . . . ?*

(19) **What things?**—Literally, *What kind of things?*

**Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet.**—The words indicate the precise stage of faith which the two disciples had reached. They believed in Jesus as a prophet; they hoped that He would redeem Israel. They had not risen to the belief that He was the Christ, the Son of God. And now even that faith was tottering. The whole narrative suggests that our Lord was choosing this exceptional method of dealing with them as a step in the spiritual education which was to lead them on to the higher truth.

(20) **Delivered him to be condemned to death.**—Literally, *to a sentence of death.* The words are strictly accurate. The Sanhedrin had not, strictly speaking, passed a sentence of death, though they had voted for condemning our Lord on a capital charge. For that they had to deliver Him up to the secular arm of Pilate.

**And have crucified him.**—Better, *and crucified Him*, the tense being the same as "delivered."

(21) **But we trusted.**—The pronoun is emphatic. "*We*, the disciples, *were hoping* . . . ," whatever might be the judgment of others.

**Which should have redeemed Israel.**—More exactly, *He that is about to redeem* . . . The two travellers belonged apparently to those who now, as at the time of the Nativity, were waiting for redemption in Jerusalem (chap. ii. 38).

**To day is the third day.**—We note how naturally the disciples fall, from the first, into this method of describing the interval since the Crucifixion.

(22) **Made us astonished.**—The Greek verb is that from which we get our word "ecstasy," taken transitively. Literally, *they startled us.*

**Early.**—Strictly speaking, *at day-break*, or *early dawn.*

(23) **A vision of angels.**—The word for "vision" is used of what Zacharias saw in the Temple (chap. i. 22), of the "visions" of which St. Paul was tempted to boast (2 Cor. xii. 1). It does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament.

(24) **And certain of them which were with us.**—The words have the interest of presenting an obviously undesigned coincidence with St. John's report of the visit of Peter and John (xx. 3). The naturalness of the manner in which the two Apostles are mentioned, but not named, "certain of them which were with us," may be noted, so far as it goes, as a sign of truthfulness. A later writer constructing a narrative would have brought in the two conspicuous names.

(25) **O fools, and slow of heart to believe.**—The word for "fools" (more literally, *silly, senseless*) is not that which is used in Matt. v. 22, xxiii. 17, but one belonging to a somewhat higher style of language. It is used by St. Paul of the "foolish Galatians" (Gal. iii. 1), and elsewhere, and by no other New Testament writer. The word of reproof sounds strong, but we must remember that our Lord had already given hints as to the true interpretation of Messianic prophecies (chap. ix. 22, 44; Mark xiv. 21), which might have led thoughtful men to see that they pointed to suffering and death, as well as to sovereignty and triumph.

(26) **Ought not Christ to have suffered?**—Better, *the Christ.* The thought that the sufferings were a necessary condition of the glory that followed,

Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? (27) And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. (28) And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. (29) But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. (30) And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake, and gave to them. (31) And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.[1] (32) And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? (33) And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, (34) saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared

[1] Or, *ceased to be seen of them.*

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became from this time forth almost as an axiom of Christian thought. So we read of "the sufferings of the Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Pet. i. 11).

(27) **Beginning at Moses and all the prophets.**—Better, *from Moses.* Here, then, if not before, there was a full "opening of the Scriptures" on all that pertained to the work and office of the Christ, and it is, at least, a legitimate inference to believe that we find the echoes of the great lesson thus given in all, or most, of the interpretations of Messianic prophecies in the written or spoken teaching of the Apostles. From the great first gospel of Gen. iii. 15, to the last utterance of the last of the Prophets announcing the coming of Elijah (Mal. iv. 5), with special stress, doubtless, on prophecies, such as those of Pss. xvi., xxii., Isa. liii., that spoke of sufferings and of death as belonging to the perfect picture of the Servant of the Lord, and the ideal King, the unfolding of the divine purpose was now made clear to those who before had been "slow of heart to believe."

(28) **He made as though he would have gone further.**—This was, it is obvious, the crucial test of the effect of the Lord's previous teaching. Did they feel a new light flowing in upon their souls, bringing new meanings into what had before been obscure and hard sayings? Were they content to let the unknown Teacher pass on, and see no more of Him? Their answer showed, in words that meet us afterwards, that their "hearts" already "burnt within them." Here, also, we note the method of the Divine Teacher as an example for other teachers. We often impress truth more effectively, and stimulate the desire for further knowledge, by suspending for a time the continued inculcation of it.

(29) **Abide with us: for it is toward evening.**—As part of the narrative, the words have the interest of bringing before us the eager desire of the disciples to know more of the wisdom which they had been drinking in from the lips of the unknown Teacher. They could not bring themselves to part with one who had done so much for them. Devout imagination has, however, legitimately read other meanings in it. "Abide with me" has become the burden of the most popular of evening hymns, the true prayer for the evening of each day, for the evening of each man's life, for the moments when hopes fail and we commune one with another and are sad; for those, also, when our hearts burn within us in the half-consciousness that Christ is speaking to us through the lips of human teachers.

(30) **He took bread, and blessed it.**—Had the two travellers been of the number of the Twelve, we might have thought of the words and acts as reminding them of their last Supper with their Lord. As it was, we must think of those words and acts as meant to teach them, and, through them, others, the same lesson that had then been taught to the Twelve, that it would be in the "breaking of bread" that they would hereafter come to recognise their Master's presence. And they, too, we must remember, whether they were of the Seventy, or among the wider company of disciples, must have had memories, it may be of multitudes fed with the scanty provision of a few barley loaves, it may be of quiet evenings without a multitude, when they had looked on the same act, and heard the same words of blessing. This meal, too, became so full of spiritual significance that we may well anticipate the technical language of theology and say that it was to them "sacramental."

(31) **And he vanished out of their sight.**—Literally, *He became invisible.* The adjective does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament. In the order of time this is the first example of the new conditions of our Lord's risen life. It was not that He rose and left the room in which they sat. In a moment they knew Him with all the fulness of recognition; and then they saw Him no more. The work for which He had come to them was done. He had imparted comfort and insight, and had brought them into communion with Himself, and then they were to be taught that that communion was no longer to depend, as before, on a visible and localised presence. (Comp. verse 36; John xx. 19, 26.)

(32) **Did not our heart burn within us . . . ?**—More accurately, *Was not our heart burning . . . ?* the tense both of this and of the other verbs implying a continuous and not a momentary state or act.

(33) **They rose up the same hour.**—As it was towards evening when they had arrived at Emmaus, and its distance from Jerusalem was about eight miles, they must have reached the chamber where the Eleven were assembled after nightfall. If we identify this gathering with that of John xx. 19, there were but ten Apostles present, Thomas being absent.

(34) **The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.**—Of the manifestation thus referred to, we have no other record in the Gospels. It occupies, however, a prominent place in those which St. Paul enumerates (1 Cor. xv. 5), and takes its place among the phenomena which indicates St. Paul's acquaintance with the substance of St. Luke's Gospel. What passed at the meeting we can only reverently imagine. Before the Passion, the Lord had "turned and looked" on Peter with a glance of tender and sorrowful reproof (chap. xxii. 61). Now, we may

to Simon. (35) And they told what things *were done* in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

(36) And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them,[a] and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you. (37) But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. (38) And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? (39) Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. (40) And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them *his* hands and *his* feet. (41) And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? (42) And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. (43) And he took *it*, and did eat before them. (44) And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the pro-

[a] Mark 16. 14.

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believe, He met the repentant eager disciple with the full assurance of pardon.

(35) **He was known of them in breaking of bread.**—The use by St. Luke of a term which, when he wrote, had already acquired a definite secondary meaning, as applied to "breaking bread" in the Supper of the Lord (Acts ii. 42, 46; 1 Cor. x. 16), is every way significant. He meant men to connect the recognition at Emmaus with their daily or weekly communion in the Body and Blood of Christ.

(36) **Jesus himself stood in the midst of them.**—The account agrees with that in John xx. 19, who adds the fact that the doors of the room had been closed for fear of the Jews. The mode of appearance in both Gospels suggests the idea, as in verse 31, of new conditions of existence, exempted from the physical limitations of the natural body, and shadowing forth the "spiritual body" of 1 Cor. xv. 44. It may be noted, however, that there had been time for the journey from Emmaus without assuming more than the ordinary modes of motion.

**Peace be unto you.**—The words do not appear elsewhere as addressed by our Lord to His disciples, but they were, as we find in Matt. x. 12, Luke x. 5, identical with the customary salutation of the Jews, so that we may fairly assume that here also the familiar words, as before the familiar act, were meant to help the disciples to recognise His presence. St. John records (chap. xx. 19) the same salutation at the same interview.

(37) **Supposed that they had seen a spirit.**—More accurately, *supposed that they were looking on* . . . For the use of the word "spirit" in this sense, see Acts xxiii. 8, 9; Heb. xii. 23.

(38) **Why are ye troubled?**—The question has a singular interest as witnessing to the identity of character, if one may so speak, of the risen Lord with all that had belonged to His humanity in the days of His ministry. He, too, had known what it was to be "troubled in spirit" (John xi. 33; xii. 27; xiii. 21), and out of that experience had grown the tender sympathy which showed itself in the words addressed to the disciples, "Let not your heart be troubled" (John xiv. 1). Now they had a trouble of a different kind, and still, as before with the two who were on their way to Emmaus, He seeks to calm and sustain them. He knows even the unuttered thoughts and questionings that are rising in their hearts.

(39) **Behold my hands and my feet.**—The test thus offered to the disciples, like that afterwards given to Thomas, was to be to them a proof that they were not looking on a spectre from the shadow-world of the dead. The Resurrection was a reality, not an appearance. In St. John's words, "which our hands have handled" (1 John i. 1), we have an interesting coincidence with the use of the same word here. The conditions of the problem must remain, however, transcendental and mysterious. There is a real corporeity, and yet there is a manifest exemption from the common conditions of corporeal existence. St. Luke's narrative presents an undesigned coincidence with that of John xx. 25. What Thomas asked for was the evidence which had, he heard, been given to others. Without that evidence he could not, he felt, believe.

(41) **While they yet believed not for joy.**—We again note St. Luke's characteristic tendency to psychological analysis. As men sleep for sorrow (chap. xxii. 45), so they disbelieve for very joy. What is brought before their eyes is too good to be true.

**Have ye here any meat?**—Literally, *anything to eat, any food.* Here again there is an agreement with St. John (xxi. 5). A new crucial test is given of the reality of the resurrection-body. It could be no shadow or spectre that thus asked for food. This we all feel; but the further question, whether there was not only the power to receive food, but a life in any sense dependent upon the laws which govern the bodily life of men, leads us into a region of problems which we cannot solve, and on which it is profitless to dwell. What seems suggested is a spiritual existence capable, by an act of volition, of assuming, in greater or less measure, the conditions of corporeal. We note how the Apostles dwelt afterwards on what now occurred as a proof of their Lord's resurrection. They had "eaten and drunk with Him" (Acts x. 41).

(42) **A piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb.**—The fact is interesting as pointing to the common food of the disciples. Fish—as in the miracles of the Five Thousand and the Four, and, we may add, in the narrative of John xxi. 9—seems to have been the staple article of diet. Honey—as in the proverbial speech which described Canaan as a land flowing with milk and honey (Ex. iii. 8, 17; Deut. xxvi. 9, 15; Jer. xi. 5, *et al.*), as in the histories of Samson (Judg. xiv. 8) and Jonathan (1 Sam. xiv. 27) and John the Baptist (Matt. iii. 4)—was common enough to enter into the diet of the poor. Even in a time of scarcity, when the corn and the olive crops failed, or were laid waste, butter and honey remained as a resource which did not fail (Isa. vii. 15, 22).

(44) **These are the words which I spake unto you.**—As with the travellers to Emmaus, so now with

phets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. (45) Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, (46) and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: (47) and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. (48) And ye are witnesses of these things.

(49) And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you:[a] but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

(50) And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. (51) And it came to pass,

[a] John 15. 26; Acts 1. 4.

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the Ten who were present, our Lord leads His disciples to the true method of interpreting the prophecies which foretold the Christ. And that method was not an afterthought. It had been given in hints and outlines before; now they were led to see it in its fulness. The three-fold division of the Law, the Prophets (including most of the historic books), and the Psalms (the latter term standing for the whole of the *Kethubim*, the *Hagiographa* or "holy writings," of which the Psalms were the most conspicuous portion), corresponded to that which was in common use among the Jews. (See *General Introduction I.—The Books of the New Testament.*)

(45) **Then opened he their understanding.**—Assuming, as we must assume, that this was the same meeting of the Lord with His disciples as that reported in John xx. 22, we have here that which corresponds with the gift of the Holy Spirit He then imparted to them. They were conscious of a new spiritual power of insight and knowledge which they had not possessed before. St. Luke's report, as derived probably at second or third hand, through Joanna or others, is naturally more vague than that which comes from the eye-witness.

(46) **Thus it behoved Christ to suffer.**—Better, as elsewhere, *that the Christ should suffer*.

(47) **And that repentance and remission of sins . . .**—Here also we have a point of contact with St. John's narrative. Though St. Luke did not know the special form in which the commission had been given, he had, at least, learnt that forgiveness of sins had occupied a prominent place in what had been said on that evening, and that that forgiveness was not limited to the children of Abraham.

**Beginning at Jerusalem.**—There is a manifest break and condensation of the narrative at this point. St. Luke has no personal reminiscences. The second appearance, when Thomas was present, those on the mountain or by the lake in Galilee, are unrecorded by him, and were probably not known. He has before him the plan of his second book, and he is content to end his first with what will serve as a link leading on to it. Assuming his chief informants to have been, not the disciples, but the company of devout women, we have a natural explanation of this comparative vagueness. In Acts i. 8, words that closely resemble these are placed at the end of the forty days, which are there distinctly recognised.

(48) **Ye are witnesses of these things.**—Here again we have a link connecting the Gospel with the Acts, the key-note of which, especially in the earlier chapters, is that the disciples are to be "witnesses" of their Lord's work and teaching, and above all of His resurrection (Acts i. 8, 22; ii. 32; iii. 15; v. 32).

**Behold, I send the promise of my Father . . .**—As far as St. Luke's Gospel is concerned, the promise thus referred to would seem to be that of chap. xi. 13. The discourses preserved by St. John show, however, that there had been the more recent and more definite promise of the Comforter (John xiv. 16, xv. 26), and so far St. Luke's report, vague as it is, presents an undesigned coincidence.

**Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem.**—Again we have a parallelism with Acts i. 4. The omission of all reference to the return of the disciples to Galilee is at first startling, but it, at least, proves the entire independence of St. Luke's Gospel, and it may be explained on the very natural supposition that he had no knowledge of further details at this stage of his history, and would not construct a narrative with invented ones.

**Until ye be endued with power from on high.**—The Greek word is probably to be taken with more of its original meaning than is conveyed by the English. The disciples were to be invested—*i.e.*, clothed upon—with a new power, which was to be as the new garb in which their old nature and its gifts were to manifest themselves, purified and strengthened, but not losing their identity. It is noticeable that this is a very favourite thought with St. Paul. Men "put on" Christ (1 Gal. iii. 27), the "new man" (Eph. iv. 24). In the risen life they are clothed with, and put on, incorruption (1 Cor. xv. 53, 54; 2 Cor. v. 2—4). The word is not used, in its figurative spiritual sense, by any other New Testament writer.

(50) **And he led them out as far as to Bethany.**—It must be admitted that this narrative, taken by itself, would leave the impression that the Ascension followed with not more than a day's interval on the Resurrection. We must remember, however, that even the coincidences between the close of St. Luke's first book and the beginning of his second, show that he was already looking forward to resuming his work, and that the interval of forty days is distinctly recognised in Acts i. 3, though there also, as here, there is no mention of any return to Galilee in the interval. Is it a conceivable solution of the problem that the devout women, who were St. Luke's informants, remained at Jerusalem in almost entire seclusion, and hardly knew of what had passed outside the walls of their house from the day of the Resurrection onwards to that of the Ascension? To them, as to others who look back upon periods in which intense sorrow and intense joy have followed one on the other, all may have seemed, when they looked back upon it in after years, as a dream, the memory of which was in one sense, as to its outcome, indelible, but in which the sequence of details could no longer be traced with clearness. If we may distinguish between two words often used as synonymous, it was with them, not recollection, but memory. On the brief narrative that follows, see Notes on Acts i. 9—11.

(51) The words "and was carried up into heaven" are wanting in some of the best MSS., and are omitted accordingly by some recent editors.

while he blessed them,[a] he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. (52) And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: (53) and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

[a] Mark 16. 19; Acts 1. 9.

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(52) **They worshipped him.**—These words also are absent from most of the best MSS. If they stand as part of the text, we must remember that they describe the attitude of prostrate adoration.

**With great joy.**—Now, at last, the disciples found the fulfilment of their Lord's promise that "their sorrow should be turned into joy," and that joy—the joy of knowing that their Lord and their Friend was at the right hand of the Father—was one which no man could take from them (John xvi. 20, 22).

(53) **And were continually in the temple.**—The statement is obviously not inconsistent with that in the Acts (i. 13), that they were abiding in an upper-chamber in Jerusalem. What it indicates is, that their days were spent, not in the routine of common life, but in the prayer of fervent expectation; and for this no place was so fitting as the Temple, which their Master had taught them to look on as in very deed His "Father's house," the "house of prayer," in which the soul of the true worshipper could find access to its God (chap. xx. 46; John ii. 16). There, too, we must remember all the memories of the precious days that had preceded the Passion would be with them in their fullest intensity. We find the same pattern of life presented in Acts iii. 1.

**Amen.**—The word is wanting in the best MSS., as it is also in many in Matt. xxviii. 20, Mark xvi. 20, and John xx. 31. In each case it was probably added by the transcriber in devout thankfulness at the completion of his task.

## DE S. JOANNE EVANGELISTA.

We pause on the threshold that leads from the Three Gospels to the Fourth, as from the Holy Place to the Holy of Holies; and I feel that there can be no better introduction to that innermost sanctuary than the hymn of which it has been truly said, that "sacred Latin poetry scarcely possesses, if indeed it possess," anything grander or loftier. (Archbishop Trench, *Sacred Latin Poetry*, p. 72.) Many readers of this Volume will, I believe, thank me for giving them the opportunity of reading that hymn in the unapproachable majesty of the original. Others will, I hope, appreciate it in some measure, even in the weaker medium of a translation. The writer is unknown, but he was clearly one who had been trained in the school of Adam of St. Victor, whose hymn on the Cherubic Emblems of the Gospels has been already given (p. xliv.), and the disciple was not inferior to his master.

E. H. P.

Verbum Dei, Deo Natum,
Quod nec factum, nec creatum,
Venit de cœlestibus;
Hoc vidit, hoc attrectavit,
Hoc de cœlo reseravit,
Joannes hominibus.

Inter illos primitivos
Veros veri fontis rivos
Joannes exiliit;
Toti mundo propinare
Nectar illud salutare,
Quod de throno prodiit.

Cœlum transit, veri rotam
Solis vidit, ibi totam
Mentis figens aciem;
Speculator spiritalis,
Quasi Seraphim sub alis,
Dei vidit faciem.

Audiit in gyro sedis
Quid psallant cum citharædis,
Quater seni proceres:
De sigillo Trinitatis
Nostræ nummo civitatis
Impressit characteres.

Volat avis sine metâ
Quo nec vates nec propheta
Evolavit altius:
Tam implenda quam impleta,
Nunquam vidit tot secreta
Purus homo purius.

Sponsus, rubrâ veste tectus,
Visus, sed non intellectus,
Redit ad palatium:
Aquilam Ezechielis
Sponsæ misit, quæ de cœlis
Referret mysterium.

Dic, dilecte, de Dilecto,
Qualis, adsit, et de lecto
Sponsi Sponsæ nuncia;
Dic quis cibus angelorum,
Quæ sint festa superorum
De Sponsi præsentia.

Veri panem intellectûs,
Cænam Christi super pectus,
Christi sumptam resera:
Ut cantemus de Patrono,
Coram Agno, coram Throno,
Laudes super æthera.

The Word of God, the Eternal Son,
With God, the Uncreated, One,
Came down to earth from Heaven;
To see Him, handle Him, and show
His heavenly life to men below,
To holy John was given.

Among those four primeval streams
Whose living fount in Eden gleams,
John's record true is known;
To all the world he poureth forth
The nectar pure of priceless worth
That flows from out the Throne.

Beyond the Heavens he soared, nor failed,
With all the spirit's gaze unveiled,
To see our true Sun's grace;
Not as through mists and visions dim,
Beneath the wings of Seraphim
He looked, and saw God's face.

He heard where songs and harps resound
And four and twenty elders round
Sing hymns of praise and joy:
The impress of the One in Three,
With print so clear that all may see,
He stamped on earth's alloy.

As eagle winging loftiest flight
Where never seer's or prophet's sight
Had pierced the ethereal vast,
Pure beyond human purity,
He scanned, with still undazzled eye,
The future and the past.

The bridegroom, clad in garments red,
Seen, yet with might unfathomèd,
Home to his palace hies;
Ezekiel's eagle to His bride
He sends, and will no longer hide
Heaven's deepest mysteries.

O loved one, bear, if thou can'st tell
Of Him whom thou did'st love so well,
Glad tidings to the Bride;
Tell of the angels' food they taste,
Who with the Bridegroom's presence graced,
Are resting at His side.

Tell of the soul's true bread unpriced,
Christ's supper, on the breast of Christ
In wondrous rapture ta'en;
That we may sing before the Throne
His praises, whom as Lord we own,
The Lamb we worship slain.

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN.

Quarti euangeliorum Iohannis ex decipolis
cohortantibus condescipulis et $\overline{\text{eps}}$ suis
dixit conieiunate mihi· odie triduo et quid
cuique fuerit reuelatum alterutrum
nobis ennarremus eadem nocte reue
latum andreae ex apostolis ut recognis
centibus cuntis Iohannis suo nomine
cu$\overset{c}{n}$ta discrib$\overset{e}{r}$et et ideo licit uaria sin
culis euangeliorum libris principia
doceantur Nihil tamen differt creden
tium f$\overset{i}{e}$dei cum uno ac principali s̄pū de
clarata sint in omnibus omnia de natidi
tate de passione de resurrectione
de conue$\overset{r}{s}$atione cum decipulis suis
ac de gemino eius aduentu
Primo In humilitate dispectus quod *fo*
*tu* secundum pote$\overset{s}{t}$ate regali pre
clarum quod foturum est. quid ergo
mirum si Iohannes tam constanter
sincula etiā In epistulis suis proferat
dicens In semeipsu Quæ uidimus oculis
nostris et auribus audiuimus et manus
nostrae palpauerunt haec scripsimus
uobis

[Tregelles, CANON MURATORIANUS.
See *Introduction*, page 377.]

# INTRODUCTION

TO

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN.

I. Life of the Apostle John.
II. Authorship of the Gospel.
III. Time when and Place where the Gospel was written.
IV. The Purpose which the Writer had in View.
V. Contents and Characteristics of the Gospel.
VI. Sketch of the Literature of the Subject.

**I. Life of the Apostle John.**—Our sources of information for the life of the Apostle John are, (1) the Four Gospels themselves; (2) the Acts of the Apostles, with references in the Epistles; (3) the traditions which have come to us in the history of the early Church.

(1) From the Gospels we know that St. John was the son of Zebedee and Salome.

The father is mentioned only once in the narrative (Matt. iv. 21, 22; Mark i. 19, 20), but the name occurs frequently as distinguishing the sons. He had "hired servants" (Mark i. 20); and John's own connection with the family of the high priest (John xviii. 15; but see Note here), and the committal of Mary to his care (John xix. 27), may also point to a position removed at least from the necessity, but not from the practice, of labour, which was customary among Jews of all classes (Matt. iv. 21).

Of Salome we know little more. It has been assumed above that she was the wife of Zebedee, and the mother of St. John; and the assumption is based upon a comparison of Matt. xx. 20; xxvii. 56; Mark xv. 40; xvi. 1. (Comp. Notes on these passages.) It has also been frequently assumed that she was the sister of Mary, the mother of our Lord, mentioned in John xix. 25 (comp. Note there); and although this cannot be regarded as proved, it is the most probable interpretation. It would follow from this that St. John was the cousin-german of our Lord. Salome was also one of the band of women who ministered unto the Lord of their substance (Matt. xxvii. 56; Luke viii. 3); and this falls in with the general impression which the narrative gives of the position of the family. She was present at the Crucifixion (Mark xv. 40), and was one of those who brought spices for the embalmment (Mark xvi. 1). In one other passage she is mentioned, and there she appears as asking for her two sons the position of honour in the Messianic kingdom (Matt. xx. 20 *et seq.*). Her prominence as compared with her husband, and the title "mother of Zebedee's children," makes it probable that she outlived him, and that the influence of the mother, whose zeal and love for her sons are illustrated in her ambitious request for them, was that which chiefly moulded the Apostle's earlier years.

Another member of the household is known to us—James, who is usually mentioned first, and was presumably the elder of the pair of brothers. At the time of his death he was, however, known to St. Luke as "James the brother of John" (Acts xii. 2), and the same writer inverts the order of the names in the same chapter (Luke ix. 28 [? reading], 52). In Acts i. 13, too, the better reading is *Peter and John and James.* The home of the family was on the shores of the Lake of Galilee, at Bethsaida, according to the usual conclusion from Luke v. 9 and John i. 44; or, perhaps, at Capernaum, which was not far from Bethsaida (Mark i. 29).

The sons of Jonas were companions of the sons of Zebedee when they are first mentioned, and had probably been friends in boyhood and youth. Whether the home was at Bethsaida or Capernaum, the Apostle was by birth a Galilean, as were all the Twelve, with the exception, perhaps, of Judas Iscariot. (Comp. Notes on chap. vi. 71, and Acts ii. 7.) He belonged, then, to the free, industrious, and warlike people of the North, who were despised by the more cultured inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon whom the yoke of Judaism pressed less heavily than it did upon the dwellers in Judæa. Removed from the influence of scribes and Pharisees on the one hand, he would on the other hand grow up in contact with men of alien races and creeds, who were found in large numbers in the populous cities of Galilee. The union of Jewish and Greek characteristics which mark the man would be thus formed insensibly in the boy.

We know too little of the family life in Galilee eighteen centuries ago to be able to realise with any fulness and certainty how the years of the Apostle's boyhood and youth were spent; and yet there are certain bold lines which can be distinctly traced. Up to the age of six he, like other Jewish children, would be taught by his parents at home, and then sent to one of the public schools, which, in the period after the Captivity, had been established in every town and important village in Judæa and Galilee. We know that after the fall of Jerusalem Tiberias became the seat of the most famous rabbinic school, and it is probable that there were already established on the shores of the Sea of Galilee the seminaries of doctors who had been themselves trained at Jerusalem. The lad would have gone to one of these higher seminaries at the age of sixteen, and would thus have been fitted for the work which, in the providence of God, lay before him, though he was not technically trained at the feet of a rabbi, and was therefore classed among the "unlearned and ignorant" (Acts iv. 13).

At the age of twelve or thirteen, John would have been taken up, as we know that Jesus was, to keep the feasts at Jerusalem. The holy city, bound up with prophecy and psalm; the temple, the centre of every highest hope and thought which, at mother's knee or at the feet of the teacher, had been instilled into his mind, now burst in all the glory of its reality upon this Galilean boy. What Oxford and Cambridge are to English schoolboys, or Rome to the pilgrim from distant lands, all this, and a thousand times more than all this, was the city of Zion to the Jewish pilgrim. Well may it be that the gorgeous ritual of the temple so impressed itself upon the receptive youthful mind as to furnish the imagery in which the Visions of the Apocalypse were afterwards to be clothed.

These visits would be repeated three times each year, and form the great events in the year's course. The caravans, the pilgrim-songs, the discourses of rabbis and teachers, the ritual of the feasts themselves, would all leave their mark upon the opening mind, and lead to question and answer as to what these things meant.

In the intervals between the feasts, there would be the regular synagogue services and instructions, the converse with teachers and friends, the daily task in his father's trade, the growth and development of character in and through all these outer circumstances.

The most prominent thought of the times, the subject on which men were ever musing and speaking of, was the expectation of the Messiah. Probably every well-trained Jewish boy expected that the Messiah would come before his own life would end. Together with this expectation of the Messiah there were hopes of freedom from the oppression of Rome; and the deep feeling of the masses frequently found vent in open insurrection. One remarkable attempt to throw off the hated yoke, which was for a time successful—when Judas the Gaulonite, and Sadoc the Pharisee, ruled the whole country—must have occurred when John was yet a boy, and his spirit must have been fired by the cry of their watchword, "God only is our Lord and Master." (Comp. Jos. *Ant.* xviii. 1.)

And so the years went on. Boyhood passed into youth, and youth into manhood. The study of the law and the prophets, the singing of psalms, the utterance of prayers, the feelings and hopes of his countrymen, must, with successive years, have brought a new meaning. The dreams of childhood and visions of youth grew into the deeper thoughts and fuller hopes of manhood.

Such was the relation of John's mind to the preparation of the past and to the hopes of the future, when the Baptist appeared as the herald of the coming King, and passing from Judæa northwards through the Jordan Valley, cried with a voice which, like a trumpet-blast, awoke men from their spiritual slumber, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Among those who flocked to this new teacher were the sons of Zebedee and the sons of Jonas. The first chapter of this Gospel leads to the thought that they were prominent among the Forerunner's disciples; and to the heart of no one, it may be, of all who heard him did his burning words come with greater power than to that of the young follower whose name was in the after-history to eclipse his own. For days, or weeks, or months, perhaps, the spirit of John the Baptist was leading the spirit of John the son of Zebedee onward from Old Testament prophecy to Him in whom Old Testament prophecy was to be fulfilled. Neither knew, indeed, that the fulfilment was so near at hand until the Baptist saw the Messiah coming to be baptised, and the disciple heard the cry, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." On the following day the words so full of meaning were again spoken, and a pair of disciples, of whom Andrew was one, and John almost certainly the other, passed from the discipleship of the Baptist to that of the Messiah Himself. They "remained with Him that day," the crisis of the life, in which its whole current was changed. (See Notes on chap i. 35—42.)

The next period of the life is one with which we are familiar from the Gospels themselves, and one which, therefore, needs but a brief treatment here. John seems at once to have followed Jesus; to have been present, and, perhaps, even to have been a central figure, at the marriage at Cana (chap. ii., Note on verse 5); to have gone thence with Him to Capernaum and Jerusalem (chap. ii. 12, 22); to have been with Him on the return to Samaria; and then probably for a time to have gone back to his ordinary life, learning in the calmness of its retirement the meaning of the lessons which the words and deeds of Jesus had taught him.

From that retirement he is again called, and perhaps the call was repeated (comp. Notes on Matt. iv. 18 and Luke v. 1—11), to be a fisher of men and an Apostle of the Church of Christ. With James his brother, with Simon and Andrew his friends, he is always named in the first group of the Apostles; and with James and Simon he forms the band of three who are the nearest friends and companions of the earthly life of Christ. They alone are with Him in the presence of death (Mark v. 37); in the Mount of Transfiguration; in the garden of Gethsemane. Peter and John follow Him within the high priest's house at the trial (chap. xviii.); John at least was present at the Crucifixion; and both ran together to the sepulchre. From the call to the Apostleship to the close of the human life of Christ, the story of the life of St. John is bound up with the outer events of the life of his Master. Following in His steps; hearing, and, with greater receptive power than any other hearer, grasping the truths that Christ taught; seeing, and, with greater spiritual intuition than any other witness, reading the signs that Christ did; loving with fuller love, and therefore more fully loved; he was preparing to be prominent among witnesses to, as he had been prominent among those who were witnesses of, the works and teaching and love of Christ.

But his character is not represented as simply receptive. He who gave to Simon the name of Peter to mark him out as the rock-man of the Church, gave to James and John, as marking out some characteristics in them, the title "Boanerges" or "Thunder-sons." (Comp. Note on Mark iii. 17.) If "Son of Perdition" was the name of him in whom there was the special characteristic marked by "perdition" (comp. Note on chap. xvii. 12), and "Son of Exhortation" that of him who had this special gift (comp. Note on Acts iv. 36), then "Sons of Thunder" marks out some force of character — sudden, impulsive, vehement, as the thunder's roll. Of this we find traces in the earlier Gospels. These sons of Zebedee, seeking with their mother the chief places in the Messianic kingdom, declare that they are ready to face all the dangers and difficulties before them; to drink of His cup; to be baptised with His baptism (Matt. xx. 20—24; Mark x. 35—41). They forbad those who cast out devils in Christ's name, and would call fire from heaven to consume those who received not their Lord (Luke ix. 49—54). Of the spirit of the Elijah of the Old Testament they had learnt in the school of the Elijah of the New Testament, and had carried, perhaps, something of the Baptist's stern denunciation of sin, and of his hardness of life and manner, into the work of Christ.

But if this is the character of John as drawn in the earlier Gospels, it is not that which is drawn in the

Fourth Gospel itself. There he is the son of love, gentleness, receptivity, rather than the son of thunder; and these are the aspects of his character which have for the most part impressed themselves on Christian art and thought. The difference has often been noted, and for the most part noted by those who have drawn from it the inference that the two pictures cannot represent the same man, and that the later is the ideal of an after age. But the picture of the natural man, taken in the fire and vigour of youth, may furnish but few points of resemblance with that which represents him in the mellow ripeness of age. Great minds are wholly changed by half a century of expansion and growth; and experience would seem to show that the earnest, forceful, impulsive character is that which ripens into calm and gentle love. If the youth represents love bursting forth in active strength, the old age represents love passively resting in being loved. The pictures, it should be remembered also, are drawn from different stand-points. The former is from without, representing the character in youth, as seen in its manifestations by others; the latter is from within, representing the character at the close of life, as the writer knew himself, and knew himself to be receptive of the love of Christ.

(2) For the next period of the life of St. John our only authorities are the Acts of the Apostles and their letters. Here, as in the Gospels, he is closely connected with St. Peter. They are named together among those who were "in the upper room" (chap. i. 13); they go up to the Temple together (chap. iii. 1), and are together before the Sanhedrin (chap. iv. 13, 19); they are sent together on the mission to Samaria (chap. viii. 14). Both are in Jerusalem after the Herodian persecution, in which James was killed with the sword (chap. xii. 2), and are at the first great council (chap. xv. 6; comp. Gal. ii. 9). These scanty notices give all that we know of a period which must have extended over some twenty years. While James was the first bishop of the Jerusalem Church, and Peter was the leader of Christianity among the Jews, it can hardly be that St. John was living a life of retirement. Other missions, like that to the Samaritans, may in part have occupied this interval; or he may have carried on a work less prominent, but not less useful, than that of St. Peter and St. James in Jerusalem itself; or he may have returned to Galilee to do a like work there. Wherever he dwelt he doubtless regarded the solemn committal of the Virgin Mary to his care (chap. xix. 26) as binding while she lived. If we may accept the traditions which place her death in the year A.D. 48 as approximately true, it may account for the fact that St. John is not mentioned with St. Peter and St. James as in Jerusalem during St. Paul's first visit after his conversion, about A.D. 38 (Gal. i. 18, 19); but he is so mentioned, and is regarded as one of the "pillars of the Church," at the visit to the council in A.D. 51 (Gal. ii. 4).

In connection with this residence at Jerusalem, extending, it may be, over many years, we have to bear in mind that while Galilee is the scene of the narrative of the earlier Gospels, Jerusalem is specially that of the Fourth. It assumes a minute acquaintance with persons and places which could be possessed only by one who had resided in the city. (Comp. p. 374.)

(3) Passing to the later period of the Apostolic life, we are left without any certain guide. He is nowhere mentioned in the New Testament after the Jerusalem council in A.D. 51. It would seem probable that he was not there during St. Paul's visit of Acts xxi., but the argument from silence ought never to be pressed, nor should it be forgotten that St. Luke records the visit only in so far as it concerned St. Paul. We may with greater reason infer that he was not at Ephesus when St. Paul bade farewell to the elders of that city (Acts xx.), nor yet when he wrote the Ephesian epistle and the later pastoral letters. It may be, indeed, that he had left Jerusalem, but had not yet arrived at Ephesus. A work of which we have no record is suggested by some MSS. of the First Epistle, which assert that it was written to the Parthians, and a tradition of such work seems to have been known to Augustine. It is, however, more probable that the Apostle continued in Jerusalem until the destruction of the city, and that he was then borne on the westward-flowing current of Christianity to the city of Ephesus, which, from the middle of the first to the middle of the second century, was its most important centre. (Comp. § III. p. 376.)

Ephesus was the link between the east and the west, between the mystic philosophies of Asia and the schools of Greece. More than any other city it had a charm for St. Paul, who had preached in it and the surrounding towns during three years, and had planted there Churches, which he saw flourish under his care, but in the midst of which he saw also seeds of future error. (Acts xx. 29, 30. Comp. Notes on Acts xix., and *Introduction to the Epistle to the Ephesians.*) From the Book of Revelation (Notes on chaps. i. 9—ii. 29) we may infer that, in addition to Ephesus, the surrounding Churches of Smyrna, and Pergamos, and Thyatira, and Sardis, and Philadelphia, and Laodicea were the special objects of the Apostle's care, and that in one of the persecutions which fell upon the early Church he was banished to the island of Patmos. (Comp. *Introduction to the Book of Revelation.*) Returning from Patmos to Ephesus after the accession of Nerva, if we may accept the early tradition, he continued there to an extreme old age, combating heresies, and teaching the truth.

The old age of St. John became the centre of legends, partly based upon fact, and partly ideal, which the early Christians loved to tell, and many of which have come down to our own day. They thought of his life as charmed, so that poison could not affect it, nor any form of death destroy it; they told—and it was not, Clement of Alexandria says, a story, but a true account—how the old man pursued a lost convert, whom he had committed to the charge of a bishop in Asia Minor, and regained him in the robber's den; how, like the Jewish high priest, he wore upon his head the plate of gold inscribed with "Holiness to the Lord;" how he, with something of the spirit of earlier days, flew from the bath in which the heretic Cerinthus was, lest it should fall upon him; how he was borne into the church when all power to move was gone, and, as if echoing the farewell words of Christ, which he himself had heard, said, "Little children, love one another, little children, love one another;" and how, when asked why he always said this one thing, the old man replied, "Because this is the Lord's command, and if this is done, all is done."

Cassian (*Collat.* xxiv. c. 2) relates an anecdote, which may be given as an illustration of the impression of the Asiatic Church with regard to the character of the Apostle. "The blessed Evangelist was one day gently stroking a partridge, when a young man, returning from hunting, asked in astonishment how a man so illustrious could spend his time in such a manner? 'What have you got in your hand?' replied the Apostle. 'A bow,' said the young man. 'Why is it not strung?' 'Because if I carried it strung always it would lose the elasticity which I shall want in it when

I draw the arrow.' 'Do not be angry, then, my young friend, if I sometimes in this way unstring my spirit, which may otherwise lose its spring, and fail at the very moment when I shall need its power.' "

But space would fail to enter on a field so tempting and so full of beauty as the traditional history of the old age of St. John. Uncertain as we have found the history to be, we cannot expect to have any exact knowledge of the time of his death. Irenæus speaks of him as alive after the accession of Trajan (A.D. 98); Jerome places the death at sixty-eight years after the Crucifixion. He lived, then, until near the close of the first century, or, it may be, that he lived on into the second century; and if we accept the tradition that he was some years younger than our Lord, we have to think of him—the martyr in will, but not in deed—as sinking peacefully to the grave, beneath the weight of more than fourscore years and ten.

[For the matter of this section, comp. Godet, *Introduction, Historique et Critique*, 1876, pp. 35—75 (translated in Clark's Library); Lücke, *Commentar*, 1840, vol. i., pp. 6—40; Neander, *Planting of Christianity* (Bohn's Library); Stanley, *Sermons and Essays on the Apostolic Age;* Macdonald, *Life and Writings of St. John*, 1876; Trench (Francis), *Life and Character of St. John*, 1850; Plumptre, Article "John the Apostle," in *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. i., pp. 1103 *et seq.;* Archbishop Tait, "St. John's Connection with Christian History and Evidence," *Good Words*, July, 1868; Miss Yonge, *The Pupils of St. John the Divine.*]

**II. Authorship of the Gospel.**—The evidence for the authorship of any writing consists of two distinct branches, of which one (1) traces the external history of the writing, and the other (2) is based upon the contents of the writing itself.

(1) The writing which everybody now understands by "The Gospel according to St. John" has borne this title through the whole history of the Church, and during by far the greater part of that history has borne it without question. From the last quarter of the second century to the last quarter of the eighteenth century the writing was received with almost one consent, as the authentic witness of the Apostle John; but this period of clear and unbroken reception was preceded by one of twilight, in which it is difficult to trace the lines of evidence, and has been followed by one of destructive criticism, extending to our own day. It is believed that to every new investigator who unites competence with candour, the light of the second century becomes more and more clear in the evidence it supplies of the reception of the Gospel as St. John's; and that the chief result of the criticism which would destroy, has been to bring out a criticism of defence which has made the external evidence of the Johannine authorship more conclusive than it has ever been before.

The evidence adduced for the reception of the Gospel as by St. John, at the close of the second century, comes from every quarter of the Church. Irenæus at Lyons, himself a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of St. John; Tertullian at Carthage, writing against the heretic Marcion; Clement at Alexandria; the Muratorian Fragment at Rome (comp. *General Introduction*, page XIII., and § IV., p. 377); the Peshito version from Syria; the Old Latin from Africa—all are witnesses, speaking with a voice the meaning of which cannot be doubted, and the authority of which cannot be impeached.

Following the line of evidence backwards through the earlier decades of the century, we meet with a fragmentary literature; and the value of the evidence depends upon considerations such as how far we have a rational ground to expect that in Apologies, Letters, Homilies, Apocalyptic Visions, there would be references to a writing like the Fourth Gospel; how far such references are actually found; how far the literary habits of the age justify us in saying that a reference is or is not a quotation; how far it is likely that a Gospel which is confessedly much later than the others, and was possibly (see p. 377) for years known only to a limited circle, should, in comparison with these, have influenced the scanty literature of the next age.

To discuss this question is, obviously, far beyond the limits of the present sketch, and requires an acquaintance with languages and a literature, which can hardly be within the reach of those for whom the present pages are meant. The result to which the opinions of the most competent scholars seems to be tending is, that we have in the literature of the earlier part of the second century fully as much reference to the Fourth Gospel as we could reasonably expect it to furnish; and that a full and fair examination of that literature, even as it has come down to us, must pronounce it to be in support of the Johannine authorship. Upon this point, those of us who are ordinary readers must be content to accept the witness of experts; and there are few students of English Divinity who will doubt that the writer of the following words speaks with an authority shared by no living author.

"If the same amount of written matter—occupying a very few pages in all—were extracted accidentally from the current theological literature of our day, the chance, unless I am mistaken, would be strongly against our finding so many indications of the use of this Gospel. In every one of the writers, from Polycarp and Papias to Polycrates, we have observed phenomena which bear witness, directly or indirectly, and with different degrees of distinctness, to its recognition. It is quite possible for critical ingenuity to find a reason for discrediting each instance in turn. An objector may urge in one case that the writing itself is a forgery; in a second, that the particular passage is an interpolation; in a third, that the supposed quotation is the original, and the language of the Evangelist the copy; in a fourth, that the incident or saying was not deduced from this Gospel, but from some apocryphal work containing a parallel narrative. By a sufficient number of assumptions, which lie beyond the range of verification, the evidence may be set aside. But the early existence and recognition of the Fourth Gospel is the one simple postulate which explains all the facts. The law of gravitation accounts for the various phenomena of motion, the falling of a stone, the jet of a fountain, the orbits of the planets, and so forth. It is quite possible for any one who is so disposed to reject this explanation of nature. Provided that he is allowed to postulate a new force for every new fact with which he is confronted, he has nothing to fear. He will then—

> 'Gird the sphere
> With centric and eccentric scribbled o'er
> Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb,'

happy in his immunity. But the other theory will prevail, nevertheless, by reason of its simplicity." (Prof. Lightfoot, in *Contemporary Review*, Feb., 1876.)

Important as these results of modern scholarship are, the results attained by the greatest thinkers and scholars at the close of the second century itself are of still greater importance. We have seen above that there was a general consensus of independent testimony to the acceptance of the Gospel by St. John. The evidential value of this fact cannot be over-estimated. Men like Irenæus, and Tertullian, and Clement, were neither morally dishonest nor intellectually incapable. They had to deal, moreover, with opponents who would quickly have exposed deceit and detected error. They and their opponents were intellectually, as well as physically, the children of the second century; their own lives went back far into it; they were removed by one generation only from the probable date of St. John's death; they had means of inquiry which we have not, and evidence upon which to base their judgment which has been for the most part lost; and it is scarcely too much to say that, had it been wholly lost, the convictions based upon this evidence would have remained irresistible. The evidence of the Versions is of the same nature, showing that the translators accepted this Gospel as an undoubted portion of the sacred canon. We find that the moment the historic mists which hang over the second century pass away, the reception of the Gospel stands out in the clear light as an undoubted fact. The light did not create this reception, but made visible that which was there before.

The Gospel continued to be received, not without here and there an objection, but without any of historic importance, until the close of the eighteenth century, when Edward Evanson published *The Dissonance of the Four generally received Evangelists, and the Evidence of their Authenticity Examined* (Ipswich, 1792. 8vo). The object was to show that the Fourth Gospel was from a Platonist of the second century. Evanson was answered in the following year by Dr. Priestley and David Simpson, and for a time the scene of the controversy was shifted from English ground. The seed sown took root on the Continent, where it brought forth a host of smaller works, and notably the *Von Gottes Sohn der Welt Heiland* of Herder (Riga, 1797), in which the author seeks to show that St. John described an ideal not an historic Christ. The well-known *Introductions* of Hug (1st ed., 1808) and Eichorn (1st ed., 1810) seem to have produced a strong reaction, and during the next decade the older opinion was again triumphant in Germany. In 1820 there appeared at Leipzig Bretschneider's famous *Probabilia*, in which he endeavoured to show the inconsistencies between the Fourth Gospel and the earlier three, and to prove that the writer was not an eye-witness, nor a native of Palestine, nor a Jew, and therefore not St. John. The work was more thorough than any of its precursors, and sent a shock through the whole theological world. There were, of course, many replies, and in the following year Bretschneider himself seems to have departed from his positions, and stated that his object was to promote the truth by discussing the subject. Once again came the reaction; and now, indeed, German thought, led by Schleiermacher, and sending forth Lücke's *Commentary* (1st ed., 1820; 2nd ed., 1833; 3rd ed., first part, 1840), which is still a classical work on the subject, was in danger of the other extreme of exalting the Fourth Gospel at the expense of the earlier three. This school maintained its ascendency until 1835, when another shock was sent through Europe by the "Life of Jesus," of David Friedrich Strauss (*Das Leben Jesu, kritisch bearbeitet*, Tübingen, 1835-6). The position of Strauss himself with regard to the Fourth Gospel was simply negative. He denied that the Gospel was by St. John, but did not venture upon the harder task of finding another author. But disciples are bolder than their master, and the Tübingen school did not long shrink from a positive hypothesis. Differing on other points, Baur, 1844, Zeller, 1845, and Schwegler, 1846, agreed that the Fourth Gospel belonged to the second half of the second century. Later investigations have again led to a reaction, and the Gospel is now confidently asserted to be the product of the first half of the century. To take but two representative names—Hilgenfeld (*Einleitung*, Leipzig, 1875) does not now doubt that the Gospel was written between A.D. 132 and 140, and Keim (*Jesu von Nazara*, 1875) would now, with equal confidence, give about A.D. 130 as its date. The last phase of the history again leads us to English ground, and must be fresh in the memory of English readers. The author of *Supernatural Religion* (London, 1st ed., 1874; 6th ed., 1875) could not pass over the question of the Fourth Gospel, and concluded that "there is the strongest reason for believing that it was not written by the son of Zebedee." English scholars have been no longer able to look at the question from without; it has been brought home to them, and has demanded an answer at their hands. That answer has been, and is being given, and the apparent result is that to the author of no English work published during the present generation will the seekers of truth have more cause to be thankful than to the anonymous author of *Supernatural Religion*, who has led to inquiry upon this subject.

(2) Passing to the writing itself, we have to ask what answer the Fourth Gospel gives to the honest inquirer about its authorship. The inquiry is a wide one, and depends upon the careful study of the whole Gospel. Many points in the inquiry are indicated in the Notes of this Commentary, and others will suggest themselves to the attentive reader. This section can only hope to point out the method in which he should pursue the inquiry. (Comp. especially Sanday's *Authorship of the Fourth Gospel*, chap. xix.)

The chief centres round which modern criticism has grouped her questions respecting the internal evidence, are the following:—

(*a*) *Was the author a Jew?*—The line between the Hebrew and Greek languages—between Hebrew and Gentile modes of thought—is so definitely and clearly drawn that there ought to be to this question an undoubted answer. The Gospel deals with the ministry of our Lord among the Jews, and it ought not to be difficult to say, with an approach to certainty, whether or not the many Jewish questions which necessarily arise are treated as a Jew naturally would treat them, and as no one but a Jew possibly could treat them. This, like every question related to the authorship of the Fourth Gospel, has met with answers diametrically opposed to each other; and yet the evidence for an affirmative answer seems irresistible.

1. The evidence of style can carry no weight with one unacquainted with the Hebrew and Greek languages, but the best Hebraists do not doubt that the style of the Fourth Gospel, while much more Greek than that of the Apocalypse, is still essentially Hebrew. Even Keim admits this (*Jesu von Nazara*, vol. i. p. 116); and Ewald regards it as beyond question that the writer is a "genuine Hebrew, who carries in himself the spirit of his mother tongue" (*Johanneischen Schriften*, vol. i. p. 44). (Comp. *e.g.* Notes on chaps. i. 3, 19, 38, 51, and xiii. 1.) It is not, however, simply that individual expressions are Hebraic, but that the Hebrew spirit comes out in the whole tone and structure of the writing.

2. Still more important than the evidence of style is that which comes from the exact acquaintance with

the current Hebrew thoughts, into which a Gentile could not possibly have thrown himself. (Comp., as a few instances out of many, the thoughts about the Messiah in chaps. i. 19—28; iv. 25; vi. 14, 15, *et al.*; about baptism, i. 25; iii. 22; iv. 2; about purification, ii. 6; iii. 25; xi. 55, *et al.*; about the Samaritans, iv. 9, 22; about the Sabbath, v. 1 *et seq.*; ix. 14 *et seq.*; about circumcision, vii. 22; about the notion that a Rabbi may not speak with a woman, iv. 27; about the Jew's manner of burying, xi. 44, and xix. 40.) These thoughts meet us in every chapter. They flow naturally from the Jewish mind, and could flow from no other.

3. Not less striking than the acquaintance with current Jewish ideas is the knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures. The Fourth Gospel is, in this respect, almost as Hebrew as the first. There can be no need to quote passages, but there are some of special interest because they show that the writer did not know the Old Testament through the Greek version (LXX.) only; but that he translated for his Greek readers from the original Hebrew text. (Comp. Notes on chaps. i. 29; xii. 13, 15, 38, and 40; xiii. 18; xix. 37.)

4. The prominence given to the Jewish feasts, and the way in which the writer makes them centres, and groups events and discourses around them, is one of the striking features of the Gospel. We have Passover (chaps. ii. 13, 23; vi. 4; xiii. 1; xviii. 28); Tabernacles (vii. 2); Dedication (x. 22); "A Feast of the Jews" (? Purim, v. 1). The writer does not simply name these feasts, but knows their history, and significance, and ritual. He is familiar with "the last day, the great day," of Tabernacles (vii. 37), and with the technical "Lesser Festival" (Note on vii. 14); with the fact that Dedication was in winter (x. 42); and with the "preparation" of the Passover (xix. 31).

(*b*) *Was the author a native of Palestine?*—Attention is frequently directed in the Notes to the minute knowledge of places. It will be sufficient here to refer to chaps. i. 28 (Bethany beyond Jordan), 44 (Bethsaida), 46 (Nazareth); ii. 1 (Cana); iii. 23 (Ænon); iv. 5* (Sychar); v. 2 (Bethesda); viii. 20 (The Treasury); ix. 7 (Siloam); x. 23 (Solomon's Porch), 40 (Bethany, comp. i. 28); xi. 54 (Ephraim); xviii. 1 (Kedron), 15 (the high priest's palace); xix. 13 (Gabbatha), 17 (Golgotha); xx. 18 (Bethany near Jerusalem).

There is constantly some explanation added to a name. It is translated for Greek readers; or the moment it is mentioned some incident connected with it occurs to the writer's mind. Many of these examples show an exact acquaintance with the topography of Jerusalem, which must have been acquired before its destruction. The customs of the Temple are familiarly known (chap. ii. 13—17); and not less so are the haunts and habits of the fishermen on the Sea of Tiberias (chaps. vi. 17—21, 22—24; xxi. 6—11), or the synagogue at Capernaum (chap. vi. 17).

The argument from these details is cumulative, and, taken as a whole, must be acknowledged to be of very great weight. Let the reader carefully note the incidental way in which all this accuracy comes out, and he will feel that it is not acquired, and that the one simple explanation is that it belongs to a writer who was born and had lived among the places he is writing of, and now dwells upon them with loving memory.

(*c*) *Did the author live at the time of our Lord's ministry?*—The remarks upon Jerusalem immediately above have their bearing upon this question also, but that which is here specially important is to estimate the evidence which comes from the circle of thoughts in the midst of which the Gospel was written. How difficult it is at any period to realise the ideas of an earlier period every dramatist and writer of fiction knows. He may clothe his characters in the dress of their day, and surround them with the manners and customs of the past, but unless they are in a consummate master's hands they will think and speak in the present. The question then is, does the writer of the Fourth Gospel think and speak the thoughts and words of the first century or not? Now the fall of Jerusalem was a great gulf across which the ideas of the Jews about the Messiah could not pass. With it disappeared from the minds of that generation all hope for a temporal Messianic reign in Jerusalem. And yet this expectation runs like a thread through the whole texture of this Gospel. The inference is that the writer grew up amidst this expectation—lived through the conflict between Jesus, who taught the spiritual nature of Messiah's kingdom, and the Jews, who could grasp only the temporal—and narrated at the close of the century that in which he himself had taken part, and which with him survived the destruction of Jerusalem.

Other instances of this knowledge of the thoughts of the period are of frequent occurrence. Comp., *e.g.*, chaps. iv. 20, 21 (Jerusalem, the place of worship); vii. 1—13 (murmuring among the people about Jesus); ix. 8 (the neighbours' remark about the blind beggar); x. 19—21 (division among the Jews); xi. 47—53 (consultation of the Sanhedrin); chap. xix. (the various phases of thought during the trial).

(*d*) *Was the author an Apostle?*—The Fourth Gospel tells us more of what passed in the Apostolic circle than we can gather from the whole of the three earlier Gospels. The writer is as familiar with the thoughts which were suggested at the time to the Apostles as he is with the thoughts of the Jews exemplified in the last section. Take, *e.g.*, chap. ii. 20—22, where the writer records the saying of our Lord regarding the Temple, and how the disciples understood this after the resurrection. There are instances of the same kind of knowledge in chaps. iv. 27; vii. 39; xii. 6; xiii. 28, 29; xx. 9, 20; and the reader may without difficulty note others.

The minute knowledge of incidents in the relation between the Apostles and the Lord would seem to point exclusively to one of the Twelve as the writer. Comp. chaps. i. 38, 50 (Andrew, Simon, Philip, Nathaniel, and the unnamed disciple); vi. 5—7 (the question to Philip); 8 (Andrew's remark); 68 (Peter's question); 70 (the explanatory remark about Judas); ix. 2 (the question about the man born blind); xi. 16 (the character of Thomas and the name Didymus, comp. xiv. 5; xx. 24, 28; xxi. 2); xii. 21, 22 (visit of the Greeks); xiii. (the Last Supper); xviii. 16 (the exact position of Peter and the other disciples and the porteress); xx. 3—8 (the visit to the sepulchre).

The Notes point out in several instances the agreement between the character of Peter as drawn in the Fourth Gospel and that which is found in the Synoptists. More striking still, because inconceivable, except by one who drew it from the life, is the character of our Lord Himself. As we try and think out the writer's representation of the human life of Christ, we feel that we are being guided by one who is not picturing to us an ideal, but is declaring to us that which was from the beginning, which he had heard, which he had seen with his eyes, which he had looked upon, and his hands had handled of the Word of Life. (Comp. 1 John i. 3.)

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* The writer takes this opportunity of remarking that the suggestion made in the Note on this word in chap. iv. 5, that Askar='A-Sychar, has been already made by Prof. Lightfoot in the *Contemporary Review* for May, 1875. When the Note was being printed he sought, without success, for any confirmation of the suggestion, which probably arose from a latent remembrance of Prof. Lightfoot's article.

(*e*) *Was the author an eye-witness?*—This question has in part been answered above; but it will add strength to the opinion which is probably fixing itself in the candid reader's mind if some of the instances of vivid picturing which Renan and others have noticed in this Gospel are collected here.

1. With regard to persons, all that has been said of individual Apostles applies. Add to them Nicodemus (chap. iii., Note); Martha and Mary (xi.); Malchus (xviii. 10); Annas, and Caiaphas, and Pilate (xviii.); the women at the cross (xix. 25); the Magdalene (xxi. 1).

2. The indication of places and of feasts given above apply also in answer to this question.

3. The writer knows the days and the hours when events occurred. He was there, and is writing from memory, and knows that it was about the tenth (i. 39), or seventh (iv. 52), or sixth hour (iv. 6; xix. 14). (Comp. chaps. i. 29—35, 43; ii. 1, 13; iv. 40; xi. 6, 39; xii. 1.)

4. We find running all through the Gospel an exactness of description, a representation of the whole scene photographed, as it were, upon the writer's memory, which is of greater weight than any number of individual quotations. Let any one read, *e.g.*, chap. i. 38—51, or ii. 13—17, or xx. 8—10—and these are only instances chosen by way of illustration—and he will, as he thinks of them, see the whole picture before his mind's eye. The only explanation is, that the writer was what he claims to be—a witness whose record is true (chap. xix. 35). (Comp. chaps. i. 14, 16, and xxi. 24.) In this respect the Fourth Gospel reminds us of that by St. Mark.

(*f*) *Was the author one of the sons of Zebedee?*—Assuming that he was an eye-witness and an Apostle, we are sure that he was not Andrew, who is named in the Gospel four times, nor Peter (thirty-three times), nor Philip (twice), nor Nathanael (five times), nor Thomas (five times), nor Judas Iscariot (eight times), nor Judas, not Iscariot (once). Of the five other Apostles, Matthew is necessarily excluded, and James the son of Alphæus, and Simon the Canaanite occupy too unimportant a position in the Synoptic narrative to bring them within the limits of our hypothesis.

The sons of Zebedee remain. Now, what is the relation of the Fourth Gospel to them? While they are prominent among the members of the first Apostolic group in the Synoptists, and in the Acts of the Apostles, they are not even mentioned in this Gospel. In chap. i. 41 (see Note there), it is probable that both are referred to, but neither are named. In chap. xxi. 2, they are, on any interpretation, placed in an inferiority of order unknown to the earlier or later history, and are probably named last of those who were Apostles. This omission of names is not confined to the sons. It was so with the mother also. All we know of her comes from the earlier Gospels. We gather, indeed, from chap. xix. 25 that she was one of the women at the cross; but we have to turn to the parallel passages before we read of Salome or the mother of Zebedee's children.

Such are the facts; but if one of these brothers is the writer of this Gospel, then, and as far as we now know, thus only are the facts explained and the conditions met. But if the author was one of the sons of Zebedee, we can go a step further and assert that he was St. John, for St. James was a martyr in the Herodian persecution (Acts xii. 1; A.D. 44).

(*g*) *Was the author the "disciple whom Jesus loved?"*—(Chaps. xiii. 23; xix. 26; xx. 2; xxi. 7, 20. Comp. xviii. 15; xx. 2, 3, 4, 8.) The concluding words of the Gospel (chap. xxi. 24), as compared with verses 7 and 20, formally assert this identification. It may be granted that these words are not those of the writer, but an attestation on the part of the Ephesian Church. Still they are part of the Gospel as it was first published, and are the words of one who claims to speak from personal knowledge.

But admitting that the writer was the disciple whom Jesus loved, then we have the key to what seems an impossible omission of the sons of Zebedee in this Gospel. The writer deliberately omits all mention of his own family, but his writing is the record of events in which he had himself taken part, and in this lies its value. His own personality cannot therefore be suppressed. He is present in all he writes, and yet the presence is felt, not seen. A veil rests over it—a name given to him, it may be, by his brethren, and cherished by him as the most honoured name that man could bear; but beneath the veil lives the person of John, the son of Zebedee and Salome, and the Apostle of the Lord.

We have now found in the Gospel answers to the questions which have been so often asked, and very variously answered, during the last half-century. If the answers are taken as but small parts of a great whole, and the Gospel itself is carefully read and studied, the evidence will in all its fulness be such as cannot be gainsaid. In the spirit of the striking words which we have quoted above (p. 372), it may be said that while here minute criticism thinks it may trace an error, or there some part of the evidence may be explained away—while various separate hypotheses may be invented to account for the various separate facts—the one postulate which accounts for the whole of the phenomena, and does violence to none, is that the Fourth Gospel is the work of the Apostle whose name it bears.

Here the two lines of external and internal evidence meet, and if each points only with a high degree of probability, then both together must approximate to certainty.

The indirect line of argument may fairly be used as evidence which leads to the same results. The Fourth Gospel existed as a matter of fact, and was accepted as by St. John, in the last quarter of the second century. If it is asserted that the author was not St. John, we have a right to demand of the assertor that he should account for the fact of its existence, and for the fact of its reception at that time, as the work of the Apostle. This demand has never been met with evidence which would for a moment stand the test of examination.

From one point of view the arguments we have now followed will to most readers seem satisfactory; from another point of view they are painful enough. The fact must be apparent to all that many men have followed out these same arguments to a wholly different result. Among them are men of the highest intellectual culture, and with special knowledge of these special subjects; men whose ability no one has a right to question, and whose honesty no one has a right to impeach. And yet contradictory results cannot both be true. If Lightfoot and Westcott, Ewald and Luthardt are right, then Strauss and Baur, Keim and Hilgenfeld are wrong. Assertions like the following cannot be reconciled:—

"The elaborate explanations, however, by which the phenomena of the Fourth Gospel are reconciled with the assumption that it was composed by the Apostle John are in vain, and there is not a single item of evidence within the first century and a half which does not agree with internal testimony in opposing the supposition."*

"We have seen that whilst there is not one particle of evidence during a century and a half after the events recorded in the Fourth Gospel that it was composed by the son of Zebedee, there is, on the contrary, the strongest reason for believing that he did not write it."†

"That John is really the author of the Gospel, and that no other planned or interpreted it than he who at all times is named as its author, cannot be doubted or denied, however often in our own times critics have been pleased to doubt and deny it on grounds which are wholly foreign to the subject; on the contrary, every argument, from every quarter to which we can look, every trace and record, combine together to render any serious doubt upon the question absolutely impossible." (Heinrich Ewald, quoted by Professor Westcott as "calm and decisive words," which "are simply true."‡)

"Those who since the first discussion of this question have been really conversant with it, never could have had, and never have had, a moment's doubt. As the attack on St. John has become fiercer and fiercer, the truth during the last ten or twelve years has been more and more solidly established, error has been pursued into its last hiding-place, and at this moment the facts before us are such that no man who does not will knowingly to choose error and reject truth can dare to say that the Fourth Gospel is not the work of the Apostle John."§

In one case or the other the human intellect, honestly inquiring for the true, has been convinced of the false. Plain men may well ask, Which are we to believe, or how can we be certain that either is true? The negative criticism has not shrunk from poisoning its arrows with the assertion that bigotry in favour of received opinions has closed the eyes of its opponents to the light of truth. It may sometimes be so; but unless much of the criticism of the present day is strangely misread, there is a blinding bigotry which prevents men from seeing the truth of received opinions simply because they have been received. There are minds to which the "semper, ubique, et ab omnibus" marks out an opinion for rejection, or at least for cavil. And yet the world is wiser than any one man in it, and truth has been written in other languages than German, and seventeen centuries of a belief which has borne the noblest results and commanded the assent of the noblest intellects, will hold its ground against the changing moods of the last fifty years. The "higher criticism" must not wonder if humbler minds withhold their assent to its *dicta* until it has agreed upon some common ground of faith which is not always shifting, and individual disciples have proved the depth of their own convictions by adhering to them. These combatants in the battle between error and truth are men of war armed in the armour of their schools, but plain men will feel that they have not essayed this armour and cannot wear it; and will go down to the battle with the moral Philistines who threaten Israel, trusting in the simple pebble of the old faith, and in the arm nerved by a firm trust in the presence of God.

The Fourth Gospel foreshadows its own history. It tells of Light, Truth, Life, Love, rejected by the mere intellect, but accepted by the whole man; and it has been with the historical as with the personal Christ represented in its pages. "Men learned to know Him, and to trust Him before they fully understood what He was and what He did. The faith which in the Gospel stories we see asked for and given, secured, and educated, is a faith which fastens itself on a living Saviour, though it can but little comprehend the method or even the nature of the salvation . . . As it was with the disciples, so also it is with ourselves. The evidential works have their own most important, most necessary office; but the Lord Himself is His own evidence, and secures our confidence, love, and adoration by what He is, more than by what He does."*

For the many to whom the evidences as to the authorship of the Fourth Gospel must come as the testimony of others, and to whom the conflict of testimony must oftentimes bring perplexity, the ultimate test must lie in the appeal of the Gospel to the whole man. If the heart studies the Christ as portrayed in this writing, it will need no other proof of His divinity, but will bow before Him with the confession, "Truly this was the Son of God." Yes; and it will feel also that the penman was one who, more deeply than any other of the sons of men, drank of the Spirit of Christ—that he was a disciple who loved the Lord, a disciple whom Jesus loved; and it will feel that the voice of the Church is the voice of the heart of humanity, feeling as itself feels and speaking as itself speaks, that this writing is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and that it is the "Gospel according to St. John."

[For the matter of this section the student may conveniently refer to Lücke, Godet, and Liddon, as before; Luthardt, *St. John the Author of the First Gospel*, English translation, Clark, 1875, in which the *Appendix on the Literature*, revised and enlarged by Gregory, is a valuable and distinctive feature; Hutton, *Essays Theological and Literary*, vol. i. pp. 144—276, 1871; Sanday, *Authorship and Historical Character of the Fourth Gospel*, 1872; *The Gospels in the Second Century*, 1876; Westcott's *Introduction*, Ed. 4, 1872, and *Canon of the New Testament*, Ed. 3, 1870; or in an easier form, *Bible in the Church*, Ed. 2, 1866; Leathes, *The Witness of St. John to Christ*, 1870, *The Religion of the Christ*, 1874: Lightfoot, Articles in the *Contemporary Review*, beginning in December, 1874; Article, "The Authorship of the Fourth Gospel," in *Edinburgh Review*, January, 1877; Articles on "St. John, and Modern Criticism," by Beyschlag, in *Contemporary Review*, October and November, 1877: and on the other side, *Supernatural Religion*, Ed. 6, 1875, vol. ii. pp. 251—476; Davidson, *Introduction to the New Testament*, 1868, vol. ii. pp. 323—468; Tayler, *The Fourth Gospel*, Ed. 2, 1870.]

**III. Time when and Place where the Fourth Gospel was written.**—(1) If the Gospel was written by St. John, its date must be placed within the limits of the first century. There is good reason for thinking that the last chapter (see Notes upon it) is an appendix, coming chiefly from the hand of the Apostle himself, but that the closing verses (24 and 25) give the corroborative testimony of others. The fact of an appendix, and the difference of its style from that of the earlier writing, points to an interval of some years, during which, it may be, the original Gospel was known to a limited circle before it was openly published. This appendix is, however, incorporated with the earlier writing in all the oldest copies and versions, and was probably, therefore, thus incorporated during the lifetime of the Apostle. The beginning of the last decade of the first century is a limit, then, after which the Gospel could not have been written by St. John. In fixing a limit before which it could not have been written, there is greater difficulty, but the following considerations point to a date certainly not earlier than A.D. 70, and probably not earlier than A.D. 80.

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* *Supernatural Religion*, Ed. 6, vol. ii., p. 470.

† *Ibid.* p. 474.

‡ *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, Ed. 3, p. x. The quotation and comment are repeated in Ed. 4, 1872.

§ Ewald, in *Göttingen Gel. Anz.*, Aug. 5, 1863, reviewing Renan's *Vie de Jésus*. Quoted by Gratry, *Jésus-Christ*, p. 119, and by Professor Liddon, *Bampton Lectures* for 1866, Ed. 7, p. 218.

* Bernard, "Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament," *The Bampton Lectures* for 1864, pp. 43, 44.

(*a*) The absence of all reference to St. John in the Pastoral Epistles of St. Paul.

(*b*) The style, though strongly Hebraic, is much less so than the Book of Revelation. It is Hebrew partly clothed in Greek, and for this development of thought and language we may assign a period of ten or twenty years. The relation of the Epistles and the Apocalypse to the Gospel belongs to the *Introductions* to those books; but it will be found that the Gospel probably occupies a middle place, being considerably later than the Apocalypse, and somewhat earlier than the Epistles.

(*c*) The subject-matter of the Gospel, while representing a later development of theology than that of the Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians, points to a much earlier development than that which we find in the earliest of the Gnostic systems at the beginning of the second century. (Comp. *Excursus A*, p. 552.)

(*d*) The references to the Jews, their customs, places, &c., are as to things at a distance and in the past, and needing explanation in the present. See, *e.g.*, chaps. iv. 9; v. 1, 2 (comp. xi. 18); v. 16, 18; vii. 13, and the instances given above (pp. 373—5).

The earliest historical evidence we have is that of Irenæus, who places the Gospel according to St. John after the other three, *i.e.*, as he places the Gospels according to St. Mark and St. Luke after the deaths of St. Peter and St. Paul, not earlier than A.D. 70, and probably some years later. (See Eusebius, *Eccles. Hist.*, v. 8.)

The general voice of antiquity gave A.D. 85 or 86 as the exact year, and while we cannot regard this as authoritative, it falls in with the probabilities of the case. Without fixing the year thus definitely, we may regard the date as one which could not be much earlier than A.D. 80, or much later than A.D. 90, and conclude that the Gospel in its present form approximates to the later, rather than to the earlier date.

(2) The passage of Irenæus above referred to gives us also a definite statement that the place from which the Gospel was written was Ephesus. "Afterwards, John, the disciple of the Lord, who also leaned on His breast—he again put forth his Gospel while he abode in Ephesus in Asia" (*Against Heresies*, iii. 1, Oxford Trans., p. 204; also Eusebius, *Eccles. Hist.*, v. 8). This statement is confirmed by the whole tenor of tradition from the second century downwards, and was never, seemingly, questioned until the commencement of the nineteenth century. It falls in with the other scanty hints of facts in St. John's life, and is in entire harmony with the stand-point of the Gospel. It will be unnecessary to weary the reader with proofs of that which hardly needs to be proved. The facts may be found in a convenient form in Luthardt, *St. John the Author of the Fourth Gospel*, Eng. Trans., pp. 115, 166, but even Davidson admits that "Lützelberger and Keim push their scepticism too far in denying John's residence in Asia Minor."

Again, the indirect argument holds good. If Ephesus is not the place from which the Gospel was written, what other place can be named with any show of probability? The only city besides Ephesus in which we might have expected the thoughts of the Prologue is Alexandria (comp. *Excursus A: Doctrine of the Word*, p. 552), but there is not the shadow of a reason for connecting St. John with this city.

**IV. The Purpose which the Writer had in View.**—Here, again, there are two lines of evidence which may guide our inquiries: (1) the statements of early writers, which may represent a tradition coming from the time of publication when the purpose was well known; and (2) the indications which may be gathered from the writing itself.

(1) The earliest statement we possess is that of the Muratorian Fragment (see p. 368, and comp. Tregelles, *Canon Muratorianus*, 1867, pp. 1—21, and 32—35), which tells us that "The author of the fourth Gospel was John, one of the disciples. He said to his fellow disciples and bishops who entreated him, 'Fast with me for three days from to-day, and whatever shall be made known to each of us, let us relate it to each other.' In the same night it was revealed to Andrew, one of the Apostles, that John should relate all things in his own name with the recognition of them all. And, therefore, though various elements are taught in the several books of the Gospels, this makes no difference to the faith of believers, since all things are set forth in all of them in one supreme spirit, about the birth, the passion, the resurrection, the conversation with the disciples, and His double advent, the first in the lowliness of humiliation which (? has been accomplished), the second in the glory of royal power, which is to come. What wonder, therefore, is it if John so constantly brings forward, even in his Epistle, particular (? phrases), saying in his own person, 'What we have seen with our eyes, and heard with our ears, and our hands have handled, these things have we written unto you.' For he thus professes that he was not only an eye-witness, but also a hearer, and more than this, a writer in order, of all the wonderful works of the Lord."

On this question the testimony of Irenæus has a special value, from the fact that he was separated from the time of St. John by one generation only, and was directly connected, through Polycarp, with the circle in which the Gospel was first circulated. It may be well, therefore, to quote his words at some length:—"In course of preaching this faith, John, the disciple of the Lord, desirous by preaching of the Gospel to remove the error which Cerinthus had been sowing among men; and long before him those who are called Nicolaitans, who are an offshoot of the knowledge [*Gnosis*] falsely so called; to confound them and persuade men that there is but one God, who made all things by His word, and not, as they affirm, that the Creator is one person, the Father of the Lord another, and that there is a difference of persons between the Son of the Creator and the Christ from the higher Æons, who both remained impassible, descending on Jesus, the Son of the Creator, and glided back again to his own Pleroma; and that the Beginning is the Only Begotten, but the Word the true Son of the Only Begotten; and that the created system to which we belong was not made by the First Deity, but by some Power brought very far down below it and cut off from communion in the things which are beyond sight and name. All such things, I say, the Lord's disciple desiring to cut off, and to establish in the Church the rule of truth, viz., that there is one God Almighty, who by His Word hath made all things visible and invisible; indicating, also, that by the Word whereby God wrought Creation, in the same also He provided salvation for the men who are part of Creation;—thus did he begin in that instruction which the Gospel contains [then follows chap. i. verses 1—5]." In the next section he quotes verses 10, 11, and 14 against Marcion and Valentinus and other Gnostics who held the Creation by angels or demi-gods. (*Adv. Hær.*, lib. iii., chap. xi., Oxford Trans., pp. 229 *et seq.*)

In an earlier passage Irenæus gives the following account of the heresy of Cerinthus: "And a certain Cerinthus too, in Asia, taught that the world was not made by the First God, but by a certain Power far separated and distant from the Royalty which is above all, and which knows not the God who is over all. And he added that Jesus was not born of a virgin (for that seemed to him impossible), but was the son of Joseph and Mary like all other men, and had more power than men in justice, prudence, and wisdom. And that after His baptism there descended on Him from that Royalty which is above all, Christ in the figure of a dove, and that He then declared the unknown Father and did mighty works; but that in the end Christ again soared back from Jesus, and that Jesus suffered and rose again, but Christ remained impassible as being spiritual" (lib. i., cap. xxvi., Oxford Trans., p. 77).

In lib. iii., cap. iii., Oxford Trans., p. 208, Irenæus relates the story of the Apostle flying from Cerinthus in the bath. This is repeated in Eusebius, iii. 28, Bagster's Trans., p. 131.

Tertullian, Epiphanius, and Jerome agree in the statement that the Gospel was written to meet the heresy of Cerinthus, but speak of the Ebionites instead of the Nicolaitans.

Clement of Alexandria is quoted by Eusebius, as saying, "John, last of all, perceiving that what had reference to the body in the gospel of our Saviour was sufficiently detailed; and being encouraged by his familiar friends and urged by the Spirit, he wrote a spiritual gospel (*Eccles. Hist.*, lib. vi., cap. xv., Bagster's Trans., pp. 247—8), and Eusebius himself says, "The three Gospels previously written having been distributed among all, and also handed to him, they say that he admitted them, giving his testimony to their truth; but that there was only wanting in the narrative the account of the things done by Christ among the first of his deeds and at the commencement of the Gospel. . . . For these reasons the Apostle John, it is said, being entreated to undertake it, wrote the account of the time not recorded by the former Evangelists, and the deeds done by our Saviour which they have passed by . . ." (lib. iii., cap. xxiv., Bagster's Trans., pp. 126, 127).

We have in these extracts three points of view, distinct but not different, from which it was conceived that the writer undertook his work. His aim was didactic, to teach that which was revealed to him; or it was polemic, to meet the development of Gnosticism in Asia Minor, of which we find traces in the later Pauline epistles; or it was historic, to fill up by way of supplement those portions of the life of our Lord which earlier evangelists had not recorded. In the later fathers and commentators, now one, now another, of these views is prominent. They do not exclude each other: to teach the truth was the sure way to make war against error; to teach the truth historically was to represent it as it was revealed in the life of Him who was the Truth.

We have to think of the Apostle as living on to the close of the first century, learning in the thoughts and experience of fifty years what the manifestation of Christ's life really was, and quickened by the presence of the promised Paraclete, who was to bring all things to his mind and guide him into all truth (comp. chap. xvi.). He lives among the speculations of men who have tried in their own wisdom to cross the gulf between God and man, and have in Ephesus developed a Gnosticism out of Christianity which is represented by Cerinthus, who was himself trained in Alexandria; just as in this latter city there had been a Gnosticism developed from Judaism, which is represented by Philo. He feels that he has learnt how that gulf was bridged in the person of Jesus Christ; he remembers His acts and words; he knows that in Him, and Him only, does the Divine and human meet; and he writes his own witness at once, in the deeper fulness of its truth, instructing the Church and refuting heresy, and supplying the spiritual Gospel which was as a complement to the existing three.

If we turn to the fourth Gospel itself we find that each line of this three-fold purpose may be distinctly traced. The didactic element is apparent throughout. That the writer had before him, not only the instruction of the Church, but also the refutation of the errors of Gnosticism—and that not only in the special features connected with Cerinthus—is clear from the Prologue. We have seen how Irenæus applies this to Cerinthus, but the very term Λόγος (comp. *Excursus A: Doctrine of the Word*, p. 552) shows that the writer did not contemplate his school only. There was an easy connection between Ephesus and Alexandria at the time, and we have an example of it in the teaching of Apollos in Acts xviii. 24. Now the distinctive tenets of all Gnosticism were that the Creator was not the Supreme God, and that matter was the source of all evil. In "all things were created by Him," we have the answer to one; in "The Word was made flesh," the answer to the other.

The writer gives in chap. xx. 21, a formal statement of his own purpose: "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name." It is usual to refer to these words as though nothing was further from the writer's thoughts than any polemic purpose. But in the passage quoted from Irenæus, on the heresy of Cerinthus, it will be seen that the separation of the divine Christ from the human Jesus was a prominent tenet. This verse declares that the purpose of the Gospel was to establish the identity of the human Jesus and the Christ who is the Son of God, as an article of faith, that in that faith they might have life through His name.

Eusebius gives no authority beyond "they say" for the statement that St. John had seen the earlier Gospels, and it does not follow that he had seen them in their present form. That he could have done so is, *à priori*, improbable, and there is no evidence of any such circulation of them as would be implied. It is further improbable from the relation between the subject-matter of the fourth Gospel as compared with the three; it contains too much that is common to all to be regarded as a mere supplement; it differs too much in arrangement, and even in details, to have been based upon a study of the others. Moreover it is in itself a complete work, and nowhere gives any indication that it was intended to be simply an appendix to other works.

The origin of the Gospels has been dealt with in the *General Introduction* (see p. xxvii.). There would be, probably, in the first generation after the life of Christ an oral Gospel, in which all the chief events of His life and the chief discourses were preserved. In different Churches different parts would be committed to writing, and carefully preserved, and compared with similar writings elsewhere. Such documents would form the basis of the Synoptic Gospels. Such documents doubtless existed at Ephesus, and John had access to them; but it is to his personal remembrance of Christ's life and work, and his residence in Jerusalem, and his close union with the Virgin Mary, that we are to trace his special information. Mary, and his own mother Salome, and Mary Magdalene, and Nicodemus, and the family of Bethany, and the Church at Jerusalem, are the sources from which he would have learnt of events beyond his personal knowledge.

[For the matter of this section comp., in addition to the books quoted, Lücke and Godet as before (this part of Lücke's *Einleitung* is of great value, and may be read in the Prolegomena of Alford, who adopts it, and in that of Wordsworth, who rejects it); Mansel, *The Gnostic Heresies of the First and Second Centuries*, 1875; Neander, *Church History*, § 4, Clark's Eng. Trans., vol. i., pp. 67—93; Ueberweg, *History of Philosophy*, Eng. Trans., 1874, § 77; Wood's *Discoveries at Ephesus*, Lond., 1877; *Introductions*, in this Commentary, to the *Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians.*]

V. **Contents and Characteristics of the Gospel.**—The Gospel is divided into two main sections at the close of chap. xii. The great subject of the first of these sections is the manifestation of Christ; and that of the second is the result of this manifestation. The first represents the life; the second, the passion, death, and resurrection. Subdividing these main sections, we have the following outline of the general contents of the Gospel:—

(1) Prologue. The link with the eternity of the past (chap. i. 1—18).

(2) Manifestation of Jesus. Varying degrees of acceptance (chaps. i. 19—iv. 54).

(3) The fuller revelation and growth of unbelief among the Jews (chaps. v. 1—xii. 50).

(4) The fuller revelation and growth of faith among the disciples (chaps. xiii. 1—xvii. 26).

(5) The climax of unbelief. Voluntary surrender and crucifixion of Jesus (chaps. xviii. 1—xix. 42).

(6) The climax of faith. Resurrection and appearances of Jesus (chap. xx.).

(7) Epilogue. The link with the eternity of the future (chap. xxi.).

The reader will find a detailed analysis of these sections inserted for the sake of convenient reference in the following notes. It has been attempted by a consecutive enumeration to indicate the lines of thought running through the whole Gospel; but these are many, and a brief sketch may be helpful to those who attempt to trace them.

(1) The Prologue (chap. i. 1—18) strikes, in a few words, the key-note of the whole. The Word with God, and God, revealed to men, made flesh—this is the central thought. The effect of the revelation, received not, received; light not comprehended in darkness, but ever shining; this, which runs like a thread through the whole Gospel, is as a subsidiary thought present here.

(2) The manifestation of Jesus (chaps. i. 19—iv. 54) is introduced by the witness of the Baptist, and one of the characteristic words of the Gospel, which has already occurred in verse 8 (see Note on it), is made prominent in the very first sentence of the narrative portion. This witness of John is uttered to messengers from the Sanhedrin, is repeated when Jesus is seen coming unto him, and spoken yet again on the following day.

The witness of John is followed by the witness of Christ Himself. At first He manifests Himself in private to the disciples, when their hearts respond to His witness, and at the marriage feast, when the voice of nature joins itself with that of man; and then publicly, beginning in His Father's house, and proceeding in a widening circle, from the Temple at Jerusalem to the city, and then to Judæa, and then Samaria, and then Galilee. Typical characters represent this manifestation and its effects—Nicodemus, the Master in Israel; the despised woman of despised Samaria, herself steeped in sin; the courtier of alien race, led to faith through suffering and love. This period is one of acceptance in Jerusalem (chap. ii. 23); Judæa (chap. iii. 29); Samaria (chap. iv. 39—42); Galilee (chap. iv. 45, 49); and yet its brightness is crossed by dark lines (chap. ii. 24, 25), and the struggle between light and darkness is not absent (chap. iii. 18, 21).

(3) Following this public manifestation, we have in the third section (chaps. v. 1—xii. 50) the fuller revelation of Christ; and, side by side with it, the progressive stages of unbelief among the Jews.

He is Life, and shows this in the energy given to the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda; but they persecute Him because He did these things on the Sabbath day. He shows that His work is one with the Father's, but they seek to kill Him as a blasphemer. Thus early is the issue of the struggle foreshadowed; and thus early does He point out that the final issue is not in physical death, and trace to the absence of moral preparation the true reason of His rejection (chap. v.).

He is Life, and shows this in blessing the food which gives sustenance to thousands, and in declaring Himself to be "the bread of life," but they think of manna in the desert, and murmur at one whom they knew to be Jesus-bar-Joseph claiming to have come down from heaven; and again the line between reception and rejection is drawn. Many go back, but some rise to a higher faith; yet even the light which shines in this inner circle is crossed by the presence of one who is a devil (chap. vi.).

He is Truth, and declares at the Feasts of Tabernacles that His teaching is from heaven, and that He Himself is from heaven, whither He will return. The perception of truth is in the will to obey it. He that willeth to do His will shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God. The effect of this teaching is that many believe, but that the Pharisees send officers to take Him. He is Life, and declares that in Him is the living water which the ritual of the great day of the Feast represented, and this is followed by a division among the people, and even in the Sanhedrin itself (chap. vii.).

He is Light, and declares Himself to be the true Light of the World, of which the illumination of the Feast was but a type. They murmur at successive points in His teaching, and in answer He declares to them what the true witness is, what His own return to the Father is, what are true discipleship and true freedom and true life, by the word of the Son, who was before Abraham. Their hatred passes from words to acts, and they take up stones to cast at Him (chap. viii. 12—59). [The paragraph from chaps. vii. 53—viii. 11 does not belong to this place. See Note upon it.]

He is Light, and shows this by giving physical sight to the man born blind. The Pharisees seek to disprove, and then to discredit, the miracle, and again there is a division. Some say that this man is not of God because He keepeth not the Sabbath. Others ask how a man that is a sinner can do such miracles. Jesus Himself declares the separation which His coming makes between those who are spiritually blind and those who spiritually see (chap. ix.).

He is Love, and declares this in the allegory of the Good Shepherd. Again a division is made prominent between those who are willing to accept and those who have willed to reject Him. Then comes Dedication, and the request to declare plainly whether He is the Christ. The answer brings again to them the earlier teaching of moral preparedness, and they take up stones to stone Him. They justify their act by the charge of blasphemy, which He proves from the Scriptures to be without foundation. But their determination has gone beyond the reach of reason, and they seek again to take Him. Rejected by His own, and in His own city, He withdraws from it to Bethany beyond Jordan. The darkness comprehends not the light, but still it shineth, and "many believed on Him there" (chap. x.).

He is Life, and Truth, and Love, and shows this in going again to Judæa to conquer death, and reveal the fuller truth of the Resurrection and Life, and sympathise with the sorrowing home. The attributes of divinity are so fully manifested that many of the Jews believe, but with the clearer light the darkness is also made more fully visible, and the Sanhedrin formally decree His death. When this decree is passed He again withdraws to the wilderness, but disciples are still with Him (chap. xi.).

As the Passover draws near He is again at Bethany. Love to Him is shown in the devotion of Mary; the selfishness and hatred which shut out love, in the murmur of Judas and the consultation of the chief priests to destroy the life of Lazarus which Jesus had restored. But conviction has seized the masses of the people, and the King is received into the royal city with shouts of "Hosanna!" Even the Pharisees feel that the "world is gone after Him," and there is present the earnest of a wider world than that of which they thought. Men came from the West to the cross, as men had come from the East to the cradle, and are the firstfruits of the moral power which is to draw all men. Life conquering in death is the thought suggested by the presence of the Greeks; light and darkness is again the form in which the thought of His rejection by the Jews is clothed. But the struggle is drawing to a close, and the writer adds his own thoughts and gathers up earlier words of Jesus on those who rejected Light and Truth and Life and Love (chap. xii.).

(4) With the next section (chaps. xiii. 1—xvii. 26) we pass from the revelation to the Jews to the fuller revelation to the disciples. It is the passing from hatred to love, from darkness to light; but as in the deepest darkness of rejection rays of light are ever present, so the fullest light of acceptance is never free from shadows.

His Love is shown by the significant act of washing the disciples' feet, and this is spiritually interpreted. His words of love cannot, however, apply to all, for the dark presence of the betrayer is still with them. When Hatred withdraws from the presence of Love, and Judas goes out into the night, then the deeper thoughts of Jesus (which are as the revelation of heaven to earth) are spoken without reserve. This discourse continues from chaps. xiii. 31—xvi. 33, when it passes into the prayer of the seventeenth chapter.

It tells them of His glory because He is going to the Father; of the Father's house where He will welcome them; that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; that being absent, He will still be present, answering their prayers, sending to them the Paraclete, abiding in them; that His peace shall remain with them. It tells, in the allegory of the Vine, that there is an unseen spiritual union between Him and the Church, and every individual member of it; that there is, therefore, to be union between themselves; that the world will necessarily hate them because they are not of it; but that the Paraclete in them, and they themselves, of their own knowledge, should be the witness to the world.

It tells them the truth so hard to learn—that His own departure is expedient; declares the coming and the office of the Paraclete, and His own spiritual power with them, and comforts them with the thought of the full revelation of the Father, and the final victory over the world which He has overcome. Their faith rises to the sure conviction that He is from God. But even this full acceptance is not unclouded; He knows they will all be scattered, and leave Him alone.

And then having in fulness of love taught them, He lifts His eyes to heaven and prays for Himself, for the disciples, and for all believers, that in Him, as believers, they may have the communion with the Godhead which comes from the revelation of the Father through the Son.

(5) But here again in the narrative Darkness alternates with Light, and Hatred with Love. From the sacred calm of this inner circle we pass (chaps. xviii. 1—xix. 42) to the betrayal and apprehension, the trials before the Jewish and Roman authorities, the committal and crucifixion, the death and burial. Unbelief has reached its climax, and hatred gazes upon Him whom it has crucified.

(6) But love is greater than hatred, and light than darkness, and life than death. From the climax of unbelief we pass to the climax of faith. Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, and Joseph of Arimathæa, join with the band of women in the last office of love. The appearance to Mary Magdalene, to the ten Apostles, to the eleven now including Thomas, has carried conviction to all, and drawn from Him who is last to believe the fullest expression of faith, "My Lord and my God" (chap. xx.).

The writer has traced the struggle between acceptance and rejection through its successive stages, and now that the victory is won the purpose of His work is fulfilled. There is a faith more blessed than sight, and these things are written that we may believe.

(7) The things which the writer has told are but a few of those with which his memory was stored. There were many signs not written in this book. He afterwards (comp. Notes on chap. xxi.) adds one of those which serves as a link with the future, in part, perhaps, to prevent a misconception which had sprung up about his own life. Other disciples, too, give to his writing the stamp of their own knowledge of its certain truth.

Such are the characteristics of this Gospel. We feel as we read them that we are in a region of thoughts widely different from those of the earlier Gospels.

The characteristic thoughts naturally express themselves in characteristic words, and many of these are dwelt upon in the following Notes. The reader will not need to be reminded, as he again and again comes upon the words "light" (which occurs twenty-three times), "life" (fifty-two times), "love" (seven times; 1 John seventeen times), "truth" (twenty-five times), "true" (ideally, nine times), "witness" (substantive and verb, forty-seven times), "believe" (ninety-eight times), "world" (seventy-eight times), "sign" (seventeen times), that he has in such words the special forms which express the special thoughts which have come to us through St. John. Some characteristics in style have been pointed out in § II. as bearing upon the authorship of the Gospel.

**VI. Sketch of the Literature of the Subject.**—References have already been given, under the earlier sections of this Introduction, to works where the reader may find fuller information upon the different topics dealt with. Here it is intended to note such works as the ordinary reader may without difficulty have access to, and which bear upon the subject-matter of the Gospel itself.

Of the older commentaries, Chrysostom's *Homilies on the Gospel of St. John*, and the *Tractatus* 124 *in Joannem* of Augustine, may be read in the Oxford Library of the Fathers. The *Commentary of Cyril* of Alexandria has lately been translated by Mr. P. E. Pusey, Oxford, 1875. The *Aurea Catena* of Thomas Aquinas is accessible in the Oxford translation of 1841—45.

Of more modern Commentaries, Lampe's three quarto volumes in Latin (*Basileæ*, 1725—27), take the first place, and are a storehouse from which almost all his successors have freely borrowed. The century and a half which has passed since his book appeared has been fruitful in works on St. John. A selection of exegetical works prefixed to the second volume of Meyer's *Commentary*, Eng. Trans., 1875, contains more than forty published during this period, and the number may be largely increased. The Appendix to the English translation of Luthardt's *St. John the Author of the Fourth Gospel*, contains a list of some 500 works and articles upon the authenticity and genuineness alone, which has been published since the year 1790.

In our own day the best results of New Testament criticism, as applied to this Gospel, have been presented to the English reader in the *Commentaries* of Tholuck, Ed. 7, 1857, Eng. Trans., 1860; Olshausen, edited by Ebrard and Wiesinger, 1862, Eng. Trans., 1855; Bengel, Eng. Trans., 1874; Luthardt, Ed. 2, 1875—6, Eng. Trans., 1877; Godet, Ed. 2, with critical Introduction, 1877, Eng. Trans., 1877; Meyer, Ed. 5, 1869, Eng. Trans., 1875, all published by Messrs. Clark, of Edinburgh.

In our own country the *Commentaries* of Wordsworth, 1868, and Alford, Ed. 7, 1874, are known to all students of the New Testament, and the latter work has been also arranged specially for English readers (1868). Two works, which are less known than they deserve to be, may be specially noted as furnishing in a convenient form the patristic interpretation: *Commentary on the Authorised English Version of the Gospel according to St. John*, by the Rev. F. H. Dunwell, London, 1872; and *The Gospel of John, illustrated from Ancient and Modern Authors*, by Rev. J. Ford, London, 1852. Two other English books on this Gospel deal specially with its subject-matter: the well-known *Discourses* at Lincoln's Inn of the late Frederick Denison Maurice, a work marked by his spiritual insight and earnest devotion, and containing a striking criticism on Baur's mythical theory, Camb. 1857; and *The Doctrinal System of St. John*, by Professor Lias, London, 1875.

For all questions of geography, chronology, and Jewish antiquities, the English reader has the latest results of scholarship in the *Biblical Dictionaries* edited by Dr. William Smith and by Dr. Kitto, Ed. 3, 1866; in Dean Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*; in the *Reports* of the "Palestine Exploration Fund;" in the *Synopsis* of Dr. Karl Wieseler, Eng. Trans., 1864; in the *Chronological and Geographical Introduction* of Dr. Ch. Ed. Caspari, Eng. Trans., 1876. Special reference may be made to the articles on Jewish subjects by Dr. Ginsburg in Kitto's *Cyclopædia*. See, *e.g.*, in connection with this Gospel the articles on "Education," "Dispersion," "Dedication" "Purim," "Passover," and "Tabernacles."

On questions of the text, and the translation of the text, a very valuable help has been furnished in *The Holy Bible, with Various Renderings and Readings from the Best Authorities*, London, 1876; this Gospel has also been revised by "Five Clergymen," London, 1857, and the results have been incorporated in *The New Testament, Authorised Version Revised*, London, 1876, of the late Dean Alford, who was one of them.

The aim of the present writer has been to help the English reader to understand the Gospel according to St. John. Within the brief limits of time and space at his command, he has tried to think out and express the writer's meaning; and in the many difficulties which beset his path, has not consciously neglected any important guide. He is not unaware that some subjects are dwelt upon but briefly, and that others are entirely passed over, upon which the reader may seek information; but the pages of a Commentary are not those of a Theological Encyclopædia, and his own pages are but part of a greater whole. He trusts that no part of any text has been passed over without an honest attempt to ascertain and give its true meaning. The attempt will not be in vain if it helps any who have not access to works of greater learning and scholarship, to study and learn for themselves the meaning of words which, without such such study, no one can teach.

It remains for the writer to express his obligations to the works which he has above mentioned, and to many others from which, directly and indirectly, thoughts have been suggested. To Lücke, Luthardt (especially in the Analysis), Godet, and Alford (both Commentary and Translation), he is conscious of owing a constant debt; but the work which has influenced his own thoughts most in the study of the New Testament, and without which the following Notes, though entirely differing from it in purpose and character, could not have been written, is the *Kritisch Exegetisches Handbuch* of Dr. Heinrich Meyer.

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN.

CHAPTER I.—(1) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (2) The same was in the beginning with God.[a] (3) All things were made by him;[b] and without him was not any thing made that was made. (4) In him was life; and the life was the light

a Gen. 1. 1.
b Col. 1. 16.

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[1. **Prologue** (verses 1—18).

THE WORD (1) *was God* (verses 1—5);
(2) *became man* (verses 6—13);
(3) *revealed the Father* (verses 14—18).]

(1) **In the beginning.**—The reference to the opening words of the Old Testament is obvious, and is the more striking when we remember that a Jew would constantly speak of and quote from the book of Genesis as *Bᵉrēshîth* ("in the beginning"). It is quite in harmony with the Hebrew tone of this Gospel to do so, and it can hardly be that St. John wrote his *Bᵉrēshîth* without having that of Moses present to his mind, and without being guided by its meaning. We have then, in the earlier words, a law of interpretation for the later, and this law excludes every such sense as "the Everlasting Father" or "the divine wisdom," which is before all things, though both these have been supported by here and there a name of weight; much more does this law, strengthened as it is by the whole context, exclude any such sense as "the commencement of Christ's work on earth," which owes its existence to the foregone conclusion of a theory, and is marked by the absence of any support of weight. Our law seems equally to exclude from *these* words the idea of "anteriority to time," which is expressed, not in them, but in the substantive verb which immediately follows. The Mosaic conception of "beginning" is marked by the first creative act. St. John places himself at the same starting point of time, but before he speaks of any creation he asserts the pre-existence of the Creator. In this "beginning" there already "was" the Word. (See expressions of this thought in chap. xvii. 5; Prov. viii. 23; 1 John i. 1; Rev. iii. 14.)

**Was the Word.**—See *Excursus A: Doctrine of the Word.*

**With God.**—These words express the co-existence, but at the same time the distinction of person. They imply relation with, intercourse with. (Comp. the "in the bosom of the Father" of verse 18, and "Let *us* make man" of Gen. i. 26.) "Throned face to face with God," "the gaze ever directed towards God," have been given as paraphrases, and the full sense cannot be expressed in fewer words. The "with" represents "motion towards." The Being whose existence is asserted in the "was" is regarded as distinct, but not alone, as ever going forth in communion with God. (Comp. the use of the same word "with" in Matt. xiii. 56; xxvi. 15; Mark vi. 3; ix. 19; 1 Cor. xvi. 6, 7; Gal. i. 18; iv. 18.)

**Was God.**—This is the completion of the graduated statement. It maintains the distinction of person, but at the same time asserts the oneness of essence.

(2) **The same was.**—This is a summary in one clause of the three assertions made in the first verse.

**The same,** that is, the Word who was God, existed before any act of creation, and in that existence was a person distinct from God. Yet it is more than a re-statement. We have arrived at the thought that the Word was one in nature with God. From this higher point of view, the steps below us are more clearly seen. The Word was God; the eternal pre-existence and personality are included in the thought.

(3) From the person of the Word we are guided to think of His creative work. The first chapter of Genesis is still present to the mind, but a fuller meaning can now be given to its words. All things came into existence by means of the pre-existent Word, and of all the things that now exist none came into being apart from Him.

**All things.**—The words express in the grandeur of an unthinkable array of units what is expressed in totality by "the world" in verse 10. The completion of the thought by the negative statement of the opposite brings sharply before us the infinitely little in contrast with the infinitely great. Of all these units not one is by its vastness beyond, or by its insignificance beneath His creative will. For the relation of the Word to the Father in the work of creation, comp. Note on Col. i. 15, 16.

For the form of this verse, which is technically known as antithetic parallelism, comp. chaps. v. 8, 20; viii. 23; x. 27, 28; 1 John ii. 4, 27, *et al.* It is found not unfrequently in other parts of the New Testament, but it is a characteristic of St. John's Hebrew style. Its occurrence in the poetry of the Old Testament, *e.g.*, in the Psalms (Ps. lxxxix. 30, 31, *et al.*) will be familiar to all.

(4) **In him was life.**—The creation, the calling into existence life in its varied forms, leads up to the source of this life. It is in the Word by original being, while of the highest creature made "in the image of God" we are told that God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul" (Gen. ii. 7).

"Life" has here no limitation, and is to be understood in its widest sense; the life of the body, even of organisms which we commonly think of as inanimate, the life of the soul, the life of the spirit; life in the present, so far as there is communion with the eternal source of life; life in the future, when the idea shall be realised and the communion be complete.

**Was.**—This is in the Greek the same verb of existence that we have had in verses 1 and 2, and is different from the word in verse 3. Comp. Notes on verse 6, and chap. viii. 58. It places us, then, at the same starting of men. (5) And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

A.D. 26.

[a] Matt. 3. 1.

(6) There was a man sent from God,[a] whose name *was* John. (7) The same came for a witness, to bear witness of

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point of time. The Word was ever life, and from the first existence of any creature became a source of life to others. But the "was" of the first clause of this verse should not be pressed, for we are not quite certain that the original text contained it. Two of our oldest MSS. have "is," which is supported by other evidence, and is not in itself an improbable reading. The meaning in this case would be "in the Word there ever is life." Creation is not merely a definite act. There is a constant development of the germs implanted in all the varied forms of being, and these find their sustaining power in the one central source of life. The thought will meet us again in verse 17; but see especially the expression, "upholding all things by the word of his power" (Heb. i. 3, Note).

**And the life was the light of men.**—We are led from the relation of the Word to the universe to His relation to mankind. That which to lower beings in the scale of creation was more or less fully life, as the nature of each was more or less receptive of its power, is to the being endowed with a moral nature and made in the divine image the satisfaction of every moral need, and the revelation of the divine Being. The "was" still carries us back to the first days of time, when creation in all the beauty of its youth was unstained by sin, when no night had fallen on the moral world, but when there was the brightness of an ever-constant noon-tide in the presence of God. But here, too, the "was" passes in sense into the "is." "God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all." In every man there are rays of light, stronger or feebler, in greater or lesser darkness. In every man there is a power to see the light, and open his soul to it, and the more he has it still to crave for more. This going forth of the soul to God, is the seeking for life. The Word is the going forth of God to the soul. He is life. In the feeling after, there is finding. The moral struggle is the moral strength. The eye that seeks for light cannot seek in vain. The life was and is the light of men.

(5) **And the light shineth in darkness.**—The vision of brightness is present but for a moment, and passes away before the black reality of the history of mankind. The description of Paradise occupies but a few verses of the Old Testament. The outer darkness casts its gloom on every page. But in the moral chaos, too, God said, "Let there be light; and there was light." The first struggle of light into and through darkness until the darkness received it, rolled back before it, passed away into it—the repeated comprehension of light by darkness, as in the dawn of every morning the night passes into day, and the earth now shrouded in blackness is now bathed in the clear white light of an Eastern sun—this has its counterpart in the moral world. There, too, the Sun of Righteousness has shone, is ever shining; but as the Apostle looks back on the history of the pre-Christian world, or, it may be, looks back on the earthly ministry of Christ Himself, he seeks in vain for the victory of truth, for the hearts of nations, or of men, penetrated through and through with heaven's light, and he sums up the whole in one sad negation, "The darkness comprehended it not." Yet in this very sadness there is firm and hopeful faith. The emphatic present declares that the light still, always, "shineth in darkness." True are those words of patriarch, lawgiver, prophet, as they followed the voice which called, or received God's law for men, or told forth the word which came to them from Him; true are they of every poet, thinker, statesman, who has grasped some higher truth, or chased some lurking doubt, or taught a nation noble deeds; true are they of every evangelist, martyr, philanthropist, who has carried the light of the gospel to the heart of men, who has in life or death witnessed to its truth, who has shown its power in deeds of mercy and of love; true are they of the humblest Christian who seeks to walk in the light, and from the sick-chamber of the lowliest home may be letting [illegible] light shine before men which leads them to glorify the Father which is in heaven. The Light is ever shining, ofttimes, indeed, coloured as it passes through the differing minds of different men, and meeting us across the space that separates continents, and the time that separates ages, in widely varying hues; but these shades pass into each other, and in the harmony of all is the pure light of truth.

**Comprehended it not.**—The meaning of this word differs from that rendered "knew not" in verse 10. The thought here is that the darkness did not lay hold of, did not appropriate the light, so as itself to become light; the thought there is that individuals did not recognise it. Comp. Notes on Rom. ix. 30; 1 Cor. ix. 24; Phil. iii. 12, 13, where the same Greek word occurs. See also Eph. iii. 18, which is the only passage in the New Testament, besides the present one, where the word is rendered by "comprehend."

(6) **There was a man,** or, *There appeared a man.* The word is the same as that which is used in verse 3, "were made," "was made," and, as contrasted with the verb "was" in verses 1, 2, 4, signifies the coming into being, as contrasted with original existence. In the same way "man" is emphatically opposed to "the Word," who is the subject of the previous verses. "The Word was God:" the man was "sent from God."

On the mission of John, see Notes on Matt. iii. The name was not uncommon, but it is striking that it is given here without the usual distinctive "Baptist." The writer stood to him in the relation of disciple to teacher. To him he was *the* John. A greater teacher had not then appeared, but when He did appear, former teacher and disciple alike bear witness to Him. Great as was the forerunner, the least in the kingdom of heaven became greater than he was, and to after ages the disciple became *the* John, and his earlier master is given the title "Baptist," which distinguishes the man and commemorates the work.

(7) **For a Witness.**—Stress is laid upon the work of John as "witness." This was generally the object of his coming. It was specially to "bear witness of the Light." The purpose of testimony is conviction "that all men through him might believe," *i.e.*, through John, through his witness. Compare with this purpose of the Baptist's work the purpose of the Apostle's writing, as he himself expresses it in the closing words of chap. xx.; and also the condition and work of the Apostleship, as laid down by St. Peter at the first meeting after the Resurrection (Acts i. 21, 22). The word "witness," with its cognate forms, is one of the key-notes of the Johannine writings recurring alike in the Gospel, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse. This is partly concealed from the general reader by the various

the Light, that all *men* through him might believe. (8) He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light. (9) *That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. (10) He was in the world, and the world was made by him,[a] and the world knew him not. (11) He came unto his own, and his own received him not. (12) But as many as

[a] Heb. 11 3.

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renderings "record," "testimony," "witness," for the one Greek root; but he may see by consulting any English concordance under these words, how frequently the thought was in the Apostle's mind. See especially Rev. i. 2, 9, Notes.

(8) **He was not that Light, but was sent.**—It is necessary to repeat the statement of John's position and work in an emphatic form. Now first for 400 years a great teacher had appeared in Israel. The events of his birth and life had excited the attention of the masses; his bold message, like the cry of another Elias, found its way in burning words to the slumbering hearts of men; and even from the least likely classes, from Pharisee and Sadducee, from publican and soldier, there came the heart's question, "What shall we do?" The extent of the religious revival does not impress us, because it passed into the greater which followed, but the statement of a publican living at the time is that "Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the region round about Jordan, went out to Him, and were baptized of Him in Jordan, confessing their sins" (Matt. iii. 5, 6). But what was this power in their midst? Who could be the person uttering these more than human words? A comparison of verses 19 and 20 in this chapter with Luke iii. 15 shows a widespread opinion that he was at least possibly the Messiah. He himself with true greatness recognised the greater, but as in many a like case in after days, the followers had not all the leader's nobility of soul. We shall meet signs of this in chaps. iii. 26 and iv. 1. We find traces of it in Matt. ix. 14, &c. (see Note at this place), and even in Ephesus, as late as St. Paul's third missionary journey, we find "certain disciples" knowing nothing more than "John's baptism" (Acts xix. 1—6). It was at Ephesus that this Gospel was written and the existence of a body of such "disciples" may have led to the full statement in this verse made by one who had himself been among the Baptist's earliest followers.

It was otherwise with the disciple who wrote these words. He is content to claim for his master as for himself the noblest human work, "to bear witness of that Light." No one may add to it; all may, in word and life, bear witness to it. Every discovery in science and advance in truth is a removal of some cloud which hides it from men; every noble character is bearing it about; every conquest of sin is extending it. It has been stored in mines of deepest thought in all ages. The heedless pass over the surface unconscious of it. The world's benefactors are they who bring it forth to men as the light and warmth of the rays of the Sun of Righteousness. (Comp. chap. v. 35, and Note there.)

(9) **That was the true Light.**—The right rendering of this verse is uncertain. It would, probably, give a better sense to translate it, *The true Light which lighteth every man was coming into the world, i.e.*, was manifesting itself at the time when John was bearing witness and men were mistaking the lamp for the light. (Comp. chap. v. 35, Note.)

**The true Light** was not "true" as opposed to "false," but "true" as answering to the perfect ideal, and as opposed to all more or less imperfect representations. The meaning of the Greek is quite clear. The difficulty arises from the fact that in English there is but one word to represent the two ideas. The word for the fuller meaning of "ideally true" is not confined to St. John, but is naturally of very frequent recurrence in his writings. The adjective is used nine times in this Gospel, and not at all in the other three. A comparison of the passages will show how important it is to get a right conception of what the word means, and will help to give it. (See chaps. iv. 23, 37; vi. 32; vii. 28; viii. 16; xv. 1; xvii. 3; xix. 35.) But, as ideally true, the Light was not subject to the changing conditions of time and space, but was and is true for all humanity, and "lighteth every man."

(10) **In the world.**—This manifestation in the flesh recalls the pre-incarnate existence during the whole history of the world, and the creative act itself. (Comp. verses 2 and 3, Note). The two facts are the constant presence of the true Light, and the creation of the world by Him. The world, then, in its highest creature man, with spiritual power for seeing the true Light, ought to have recognised Him. Spirit ought to have felt and known His presence. In this would have been the exercise of its true power and its highest good. But the world was sense-bound, and lost its spiritual perception, and "knew Him not." This verse brings back again the thought of verses 3—5, to prepare for the deeper gloom which follows.

(11) **He came,** as distinct from the "was" of the previous verse, passes on to the historic advent; but as that was but the more distinct act of which there had been foreshadowings in every appearance and revelation of God, these Advents of the Old Testament are not excluded.

**His own** is neuter, and the same word which is used in chap. xix. 27, where it is rendered "his own *home*." (Comp. chap. xvi. 32, margin, and Acts xxi. 6.) What then was the "home?" It is distinguished from the "world" of verse 10, and it cannot but be that the home of Jewish thought was the land, the city, the temple bound up with every Messianic hope. Traces of this abound in the Jewish Scriptures. Comp. especially Mal. iii. 1, "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple." (See also Luke ii. 49, Note.)

**His own** in the second clause is masculine—the dwellers in His own home, who were His own people, the special objects of His love and care. (See Ex. xix. 5; Deut. vii. 6; Ps. cxxxv. 4; Isa. xxxi. 9, and Notes on Eph. ii. 19 and Tit. ii. 14.) We turn from the coldness of a strange world to the warmth and welcome of a loving home. The world knew Him not, and He came to His own, and they despised Him!

**Received him not** is stronger than "knew him not" of verse 10. It is the rejection of those for whom no plea of ignorance can be urged, of those "who see, and therefore their sin remaineth" (chap. ix. 41).

There has been an increasing depth in the tone of sadness which cannot now grow deeper. As the revelation has become clearer, as the moral power and responsibility of acceptance has been stronger, the rejection has passed into wilful refusal. The darkness comprehended not; the world knew not; His own received not.

(12) Yet the light ever shineth, and the better things lie hidden.

received him, to them gave he power[1] to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: (13) which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

(14) And the Word was made flesh,[a] and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

(15) John bare witness of him, and

[1] Or, *the right*, or, *privilege*.

[a] Matt. 1 16.

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**As many as received him.**—The words are less wide and yet more wide than "His own." The nation as such rejected Him; individuals in it accepted Him; but not individuals of that nation only. All who according to their light and means accept Him, receive from Him an authority and in Him a moral power, which constitutes them members of the true home to which He came, and the true children of God. They receive in acceptance the right which others lost in rejection. (Comp. Rom. ix.—xi.) The word rendered "received" is not quite the same as the word so rendered in verse 11. The latter is the welcome which may be expected as due from His own home. This is the reception given without a claim.

**To them that believe on his name** repeats the width of the condition, and at the same time explains what receiving Him means. It seems natural to understand the "name" of the only name which meets us in this context, that is, of the *Logos* or Word, the representation of the will, character, nature of God. (See on verse 18.) To "believe on" is one of St. John's characteristic words of fuller meaning. To believe is to accept as true; "devils believe and tremble" (Jas. ii. 19). To believe in is to trust in, confide in. To believe on, has the idea of motion to and rest upon; it is here the going forth of the soul upon, and its rest upon, the firm basis of the eternal love of the eternal Spirit revealed in the Word. (Comp. Pearson *On the Creed*, Art. 1, p. 16.)

(13) **Which were born.**—The result of receiving Him remains to be explained. How could they become "sons of God?" The word which has been used (verse 12) excludes the idea of adoption, and asserts the natural relation of child to father. The nation claimed this through its descent from Abraham. But they are Abraham's children who are of Abraham's faith. There is a higher generation, which is spiritual, while they thought only of the lower, which is physical. The condition is the submissive receptivity of the human spirit. The origin of life is "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

(14) **And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt.**—The reality of the moral power and change wrought in those that believed recalls and is itself evidence of the reality of that in which they believed. Man came to be a son of God, because the Son of God became man. They were not, as the Docetæ of that time said, believers in an appearance. "The Word was made flesh." The term "flesh" expresses human nature as opposed to the divine, and material nature as opposed to the spiritual, and is for this reason used rather than "body," for there may be a purely spiritual body (see Note on 1 Cor. xv. 40—44); and rather than "man," which is used in chaps. v. 27 and viii. 40, for of man the spiritual is the highest part. It is not the approach of the divine and human nature in the region of the spiritual which is common to both that strikes the writer with wonder, but that men should have power to become sons of God, and that the Word, of whose glory he has spoken in the earlier verses, should become flesh. (Comp. Phil. ii. 6—8; 2 Cor. viii. 9, Notes.)

**Dwelt among us.**—The Greek word means "tabernacled," "sojourned" among us. It was, probably, suggested by the similarity of sound with "Shᵉkhînah," a term frequently applied in the Targums or Chaldee Paraphrases, though the substantive nowhere occurs in the Old Testament itself, to the visible symbol of the divine Presence which appeared in the Tabernacle and the Temple. The Targums, moreover, frequently identify the Shᵉkhînah with the "Memra" or Word. (Comp. *Excursus A.*) The thought, then, of this Presence brings back to the writer's mind the days and weeks and months they had spent with the Word who had pitched His tent among them. He had been among the first to follow Him, and of the last with Him. He had been of those who had seen the glory of the Transfiguration, who had entered with their Master into the chamber of death, who had been with Him in the garden of Gethsemane. His eye, more than that of any other, had pierced the veil and gazed upon the Presence within. And now the old man, looking forward to the unveiled Presence of the future, loves to think and tell of the past, that the Presence may be to others all it had been to him. He is conscious that the statement of this verse needs evidence of no common order; but this is present in the words and lives of men whose whole moral being declared it true, and the test is within the power of all. (Comp. especially 1 John i.)

**The glory.**—Comp. chaps. ii. 11 and xi. 4. There is probably a special reference here to the Transfiguration. (See Note on Matt. xvii. 2, and comp. the testimony of another eye-witness in 2 Pet. i. 17.)

**As of the only begotten.**—Better, *as of an only begotten*—*i.e.*, glory such as is the attribute of an only begotten Son. The term as applied to the person of our Lord, is found only in St. John, verse 18; chap. iii. 16, 18; 1 Ep. iv 9. It is used four times elsewhere in the New Testament, and always of the only child. (Luke vii. 12; viii. 42; ix. 38; Heb. xi. 17.) The close connection here with the word Father, and the contrast with the sonship by moral generation in verse 12, fixes the sense as the eternal generation of the Word, "the only begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds."

**Of the Father.**—The English does not fully express the meaning. It would be better to read, *from with the Father*. (Comp. chaps. vi. 46, vii. 29, xvi. 27.) The thought is of the glory witnessed on earth of the only begotten Son who had come from God.

**Full of grace and truth.**—These words do not refer to the "Father," or to "the glory," but to "the Word." The structure of the English sentence is ambiguous, but the meaning of the Greek words is quite clear. They represent a Hebrew formula, expressing a divine attribute, and the passage which is almost certainly present to the thought here is the revelation of the divine nature to Moses (Ex. xxxiv. 6. Comp. 2 Sam. ii. 6; Ps. xxv. 10; lvii. 10; lxxxix. 15). These witnesses, too, had seen God, not indeed in the mountain only, but as dwelling among them. Every word a ray of truth, and every act a beam of love, they thought of that life "as one with the divine Essence; of that glory" as of the only begotten of the Father. (Comp. verse 17.)

(15) **John bare witness of him, and cried.**—

cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. (16) And of his fulness have all we received,[a] and grace for grace. (17) For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. (18) No man hath seen God at any time;[b] the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.

[a] Col. 1. 19.

[b] 1 Tim. 6. 16; 1 John 4. 12.

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Better, *John beareth witness of him, and crieth.* The latter verb is past in tense, but present in meaning. For the sense comp. Note on chap. vii. 37. The writer thinks of the testimony as ever present, ever forceful. Twice on successive days had he heard them from the lips of the Baptist; three times within a few verses does he himself record them. (Comp. verses 27 and 30.) They are among the words stamped on the heart in the crisis of life, and as fresh in the aged Apostle as they had been in the youthful inquirer. He remembers how he heard them, and from whom they came. That wondrous spiritual power in their midst which all men felt, whose witness men would have accepted had he declared that he was himself the Christ, uttered his witness then, and it holds good now. It is quoted here as closely bound up with the personal reminiscence of verse 14, and with the thought of verses 6 and 7.

(16) **And of his fulness.**—Not a continuance of the witness of John, but the words of the evangelist, and closely connected with verse 14. This is seen in the "all we," and in "fulness" ("full") and "grace," which are key-words of both verses.

**Fulness** is a technical theological term, meeting us again in this sense in the Epistles to, as here in the Gospel from, the Asiatic Churches. (Comp. especially Col. i. 19; ii. 9; Eph. i. 23; iii. 19; iv. 13.) The exposition belongs to the Notes on these passages. Here it means the plenitude of divine attributes, the "glory . . . full of grace and truth." "Of," or better, *out of* this fulness does each individual receive, and thus the ideal church becomes "his body, the fulness of him that filleth all things in all."

**Have all we received.**—Better, *we all received.* The point of time is the same as in verse 12, and the "we all" is co-extensive with "as many as." The power to become children of God was part of the divine fulness which they received in receiving him.

**And grace for grace.**—Perhaps, *even grace for grace* gives the meaning less doubtfully. The thought is, We all received of His fulness, and that which we received was grace for grace. The original faculty of reception was itself a free gift, and in the use of this grace there was given the greater power. The words mean "grace in exchange for, instead of, grace." The fulness of the supply is constant; the power to receive increases with the use, or diminishes with the neglect, of that which we already have. "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath" (Matt. xiii. 12). No truth is in precept or in parable of the Great Teacher more constant than this; no lesson is more brightly or more sadly illustrated in the lives of those who heard Him. What instances of its meaning must have crowded on the writer's mind in the nation, in the disciples, in the Twelve, and even in the differing power of perception in the inner circle of the Three! "We all received," but with what difference of degree!

(17) The word "for" connects this verse by way of explanation with what has gone before. The Old Testament thought of grace and truth has been already present in verse 14. The fulness of these divine attributes has been beheld in the glory of the Word. The revelation of them, that is, the removing of the veil which hides the knowable, has been made dependent on the use of the already known. But this is the essence of Christianity as distinct from Judaism; of a spiritual religion developed from within as distinct from a formal religion imposed from without; of a religion of principles, and therefore true for all time and for all men, as distinct from a religion of works, based, indeed, on an eternal truth (the oneness and the righteousness of God) but still specially designed for a chosen people and for a period of preparation. The law was given (from without) by the human agency of Moses. The true grace and truth came into being by means of Jesus Christ. Therefore it is that we receive grace for grace, there being in Him an ever constant fulness of grace, and for the man who uses the grace thus given an ever constant realisation of deeper truth. Note that here, when the divinity and humanity have both been dwelt upon, and in contrast to the historic Moses, the name Jesus Christ first appears. Is there, too, in this union of the human and divine names a reference to the union in Him of the faculty to receive and the truth to fulfil? St. Luke speaks of Him as "increasing in wisdom and stature, and in *favour* (grace) with God and man" (ii. 52; see Note there).

(18) **No man hath seen God at any time.**—The full knowledge of truth is one with the revelation of God, but no man has ever had this full knowledge. The primary reference is still to Moses (comp. Ex. xxxiii. 20, 23), but the words hold good of every attempt to bridge from the human stand-point the gulf between man and God. "The world by wisdom knew not God" (1 Cor. i. 21), and systems which have resulted from attempts of the finite to grasp the Infinite are but as the vision of a dream or the wild fancy of a wandering mind.

**The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father.**—The oneness of essence and of existence is made prominent by a natural figure, as necessary in Him who is to reveal the nature of God. The "is in" is probably to be explained of the return to, and presence with the Father after the Ascension.

Some of the oldest MSS. and other authorities read here, "Only begotten God, which is in the bosom of the Father." It will be convenient to group together the passages of this Gospel, where there are important various readings in one Note. See *Excursus B: Some Variations in the Text of St. John's Gospel.*

**He hath declared him.**—"He," emphatically as distinct from all others, this being the chief office of the Word; *declared*, rather than "hath declared;" "Him" is not found in the original text, which means "He was interpreter," "He was expositor." The word was used technically of the interpretation of sacred rites and laws handed down by tradition. Plato, *e.g.*, uses it of the Delphian Apollo, who is the "national expositor" (*Rep.* iv. 427). The verse is connected, by a likeness of Greek words too striking to be accidental, with the question of Jesus the son of Sirach asked some three centuries before, "Who hath seen Him that he might tell us?" (Ecclus. xliii. 31). The answer to every such question, dimly thought or clearly asked, is

(19) And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? (20) And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. (21) And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet?[1] And he answered, No. (22) Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? (23) He said,[a] I *am* the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. (24) And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. (25) And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if

A.D. 30.

a Matt. 3. 3.

1 Or, *a prophet.*

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that no man hath ever so known God as to be His interpreter; that the human conception of God as "terrible" and "great" and "marvellous" (Ecclus. xliii. 29) is not that of His essential character; that the true conception is that of the loving Father in whose bosom is the only Son, and that this Son is the only true Word uttering to man the will and character and being of God.

[**2. Manifestation of Jesus. Varying Degrees of Acceptance** (chaps. i. 19—iv. 54).

(1) THE WITNESS OF THE BAPTIST (chap. i. 12—40):

(*a*) *To the messengers of the Sanhedrin* (verses 19—28);

(*b*) *At the appearance of Jesus* (verses 29—34);

(*c*) *To the two disciples* (verses 35—40).]

(19) The narrative is connected with the prologue by the record of John, which is common to both (verse 15), and opens therefore with "And."

**The Jews.**—This term, originally applied to the members of the tribe of Judah, was extended after the Captivity to the whole nation of which that tribe was the chief part. Used by St. John more than seventy times, it is to be understood generally of the representatives of the nation, and of the inhabitants of Judæa, and of these as opposed to the teaching and work of Christ. He was himself a Jew, but the true idea of Judaism had led him to the Messiah, and the old name is to him but as the husk that had been burst in the growth of life. It remains for them to whom the name was all, and who, trying to cramp life within rigid forms, had crushed out its power.

**Priests and Levites.**—The word "Levite" occurs only twice elsewhere in the New Testament—in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke x. 32), and in the description of Joses (Acts iv. 36). It is clear from such passages as 2 Chron. xxii. 7—9; xxxv. 3; Neh. viii. 7, that part of the function of the Levites was to give instruction in the Law, and it is probable that the "scribes" were often identical with them. We have, then, here two divisions of the Sanhedrin, as we have two in the frequent phrase of the other Evangelists, "scribes," and "elders," the scribes (Levites) being common to both, and the three divisions being priests, Levites (scribes), and elders (notables). (Comp. verse 24, and Note on Matt. v. 20.)

**From Jerusalem** is to be taken with "sent," not with "priests and Levites." Emphasis is laid upon the fact that the work of John had excited so much attention that the Sanhedrin sent from Jerusalem to make an official inquiry. The judgment of the case of a false prophet is specially named in the Mishna as belonging to the council of the Seventy One. (Comp. Luke xxiii. 33.)

(20) **Confessed, and denied not; but confessed.**—Comp. for the style, Note on verse 3.

**I am not.**—The better reading places the pronoun in the most emphatic position: "It is not *I* who am the Messiah." He understands their question, then, "Who art thou?" as expressing the general expectation, "Is it thou who art the Messiah?"

(21) **What then?**—Not "What art thou then?" but expressing surprise at the answer, and passing on with impatience to the alternative, "Art thou Elias?" (Comp. on this and the following question, Deut. xviii. 15, 18; Isa. xl. ff; Mal. iv. 5; 2 Macc. ii. 1—8; and Note on Matt. xvi. 14). The angel had announced that "he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias." The Lord declared "Elias is come already" (Matt. xviii. 12, 13), and yet the Forerunner can assert that, in the literal sense in which they ask the question and would understand the answer, he is not Elias, still less "the prophet," by which, whether thinking of the words of Moses or the fuller vision of Isaiah from which he immediately quotes, he would understand the Messiah himself.

(22) **That we may give an answer.**—He has given the "No" to all the ideas they had formed of him. There is nothing left to them but to draw the definite statement from himself, or to return to their senders empty handed.

(23) But he still gives the "No." They think of his person and his work. He thinks of neither. His eye is fixed on the coming One. In this presence his own personality has no existence. He is as a voice, not to be inquired about but heard. They are acting as men who ask questions about the messenger of a great king who is coming to them and is at hand, instead of hastening with every effort to make ready for him. (Comp. Note on Matt. iii. 3.)

(24) **They which were sent.**—The best MSS. omit the relative, and the verse thus becomes, "And they had been sent from the Pharisees." (For account of the Pharisees, see Note on Matt. iii. 7.) The statement is made to explain the question which follows, but it should be observed that in this Gospel, where the Sadducees are nowhere mentioned, the term "Pharisees" seems to be used almost in the sense of "Sanhedrin." (Comp. chaps. iv. 1; viii. 3; xi. 46, 57.)

(25) **Why baptizest thou then?**—Baptism, which was certainly one of the initiatory rites of proselytes in the second or third century A.D., was probably so before the work of the Baptist. It is not baptism, therefore, which is strange to the questioners, but the fact that he places Jews and even Pharisees (Matt. iii. 7) in an analogous position to that of proselytes, and makes them to pass through a rite which marks them out as impure, and needing to be cleansed before they enter "the kingdom of heaven." By what authority does he these things? They had interpreted such passages as Ezek. xxxvi. 25 ff. to mean that Baptism should be one of the marks of Messiah's work. None less than the Christ, or Elias, or "the prophet" could

thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? (26) John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; (27) he it is,[a] who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. (28) These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

(29) The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the

[a] Matt. 3. 11; Acts 19. 4.

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enact a rite like this. John is assuming their power, and yet is not one of them.

(26) **I baptize with water.**—The passage of Ezekiel is probably present to the mind, with its contrast between water and spirit.

(27) **He it is . . . is preferred before me.**—Insertions made to harmonise the verse with verses 15 and 30. Omitting them we have, "He who cometh after me" as the subject of the verb "standeth," and the whole sentence, is "He who cometh after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to unloose, standeth among you and ye know Him not." This is the authority for baptism, the outer sign of the Messiah's Advent, for He is already standing in their midst. Here is the answer to their question. John's work is simply ministerial. The baptism of the Spirit is at hand. The coming One has come. (Comp. Notes on Matt. iii. 11 and Mark i. 7.)

(28) **Bethabara beyond Jordan** should be, *Bethany beyond Jordan.* Origen found "Bethany" in "almost all the copies," but not being able to find the place, he came to the conclusion that it must be Bethabara which he heard of, with a local tradition that John had baptised there; and in this he is followed by the Fathers generally. In support of this the etymology of Bethabara (= "ford-house") is compared with a possible meaning of Bethany (= "ship-house"), and the two are regarded as popular names of some well-known ford, one of which gradually ceased to be known as the name of this place, because it became appropriated as a name of the Bethany made prominent in the closing scenes of our Lord's life. On the other hand, it is believed that this argument from etymology is at least precarious; that ignorance of the place after three hundred years—and these years of war and unsettlement—is not unnatural; that the tradition in favour of Bethabara, which was then a favourite place for baptism, is one likely to have grown with this fact; and that we are not justified in adopting the critical decision of Origen, who rejected the almost unanimous evidence of MSS. in favour of this tradition at second hand. We are, moreover, ignorant of the site of Bethabara, and the identification with either Beth-barah (Judg. vii. 24), or Beth-nimrah (Num. xxxii. 36; Josh. xiii. 27), which in some readings of the LXX. had taken the forms *Bethabra* and *Betharaba*, gives a position much too far to the south, for the writer is clearly speaking of a place within easy approach of Galilee (verse 43 and chap. ii. 1), and he is careful to note the succession of days and even hours. It is not inconsistent with this that the narrative in Matt. iii. 5 and Mark i. 5 seems to require a place of easy access from Jerusalem, for the positions are not necessarily the same, and the account there is of a general impression, while here we have the minute details of an eye-witness. Himself a disciple of John, he remembers the place where he was then dwelling and baptising, and he knows that this Bethany is "beyond Jordan," just as he knows that the other is "the town of Mary and her sister Martha" (chap. xi. 1), and that it "was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off (chap. xi. 18). Dr. Caspari believes that a "Bethany" answering the demands of the context is to be found in the village *Tellanîje* or *Tellanihje*, which is in the Iolan to the north of the Sea of Galilee (comp. chap. x. 40). It is near a ford of the Jordan, with several brooks intervening. The identity of name depends upon the frequent substitution by the Arabs of "Tell" (= "hill") for "Beth" (= "house"), so that the present word represents Beth-anîje, or Bethany. Dr. Caspari's statement is now accessible to the English reader. Few, perhaps, will fully accept the author's opinion, "With regard to the accuracy of our conclusion respecting the site, there can, therefore, be no doubt" (*Chron. and Geogr., Introd.*, p. 93), but it is based upon a reading of which there can be no doubt, and is, at least, a probable interpretation.

We have in these verses also a note of time. John now knows the Messiah, though others do not. This inquiry of the legates from Jerusalem was, therefore, after the baptism of our Lord (verses 31, 33), and if so, after the Temptation also. (See Note on Matt. iv. 1.)

(29) **The next day.**—We pass on to the witness of John on the second day, when he sees Jesus coming unto him, probably on the return from the Temptation. Forty days had passed since they met before, and since John knew at the baptism that Jesus was the Messiah. These days were for the One a period of loneliness, temptation, and victory. They must have been for the other a time of quickened energy, wondering thought, and earnest study of what the prophets foretold the Messianic advent should be. Prominent among those prophecies which every Rabbi of that day interpreted of the Messiah, was Isa. lii. 13; liii. 12. We know that on the previous day the fortieth chapter is quoted (verse 23), and that this prophet is therefore in the speaker's thoughts. Side by side with these thoughts was the daily continuing tale of grief and sorrow and sin from those who came to be baptised. How often must there have came to the mind such words as, "He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows," "He was wounded for our transgressions," "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter," "He bare the sin of many"! The Messiah, then, was the servant of Jehovah, the true Paschal Lamb of Isaiah's thought. While the heart burns with this living truth that all men needed, and that one heart only knew, that same Form is seen advancing. It bears indeed no halo of glory, but it bears marks of the agonising contest and yet the calm of accomplished victory. "He hath no form nor comeliness," "no beauty that we should desire Him." John looks at Him as He is coming, sees there living, walking in their midst, the bearer of the world's sin and sorrow; and utters words than which in depth and width of meaning none more full have ever come from human lips, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

The margin gives "beareth" as an alternative rendering for "taketh away," and this union exactly expresses the force of the original. He is ever taking away sin, but this He does by bearing the burden Himself. (Comp. 1 John iii. 5.) A reference to the words of

Lamb of God, which taketh[1] away the sin of the world. (30) This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. (31) And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. (32) And John bare record,[a] saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. (33) And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. (34) And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

(35) Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; (36) and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! (37) And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. (38) Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where

[1] Or, *beareth.*

[a] Matt. 3. 16.

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Isa. liii. 4, above, fully establishes this. The Baptist probably used the very word of the prophet; but the Evangelist does not, in recording this for Greek readers, use the word of the LXX. as St. Peter does (1 Pet. ii. 24, "bare our sin in His own body"), but re-translates, and chooses the wider word which includes both meanings.

(30) **This is he.**—These words meet us here for the third time. They come in verse 15, and in part in verse 27. Here, as before, they are a quotation of an earlier and unrecorded statement of the Baptist, uttered in proverbial form, and to be understood in their fulfilment. (Comp. chap. iii. 30.)

(31) **And I knew him not.**—Better, *and I also knew Him not;* so again in verse 33. The reference is to "whom ye know not" of verse 26, and the assertion is not, therefore, inconsistent with the fact that John did know Him on His approach to baptism (Matt. iii. 13, see Note). In the sense that they did not know Him standing among them, he did not know Him, though with the incidents of His birth and earlier years and even features he must have been familiar. It cannot be that the Son of Mary was unknown to the son of Elizabeth, though One had dwelt in Nazareth and the other "was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel" (Luke i. 80; ii. 51). He knew not all, but there must have been many wondering thoughts of that wondrous life. Could it be the life that all looked for? but no; there was little of the Jewish idea of the Messiah in the carpenter of a country village (comp. Mark vi. 3). What he did know was, that his own work as herald declared "that He should be made manifest to Israel," and in that conviction he proclaimed the coming King, and began the Messianic baptism. The Person would be His own witness. Heaven would give its own sign to those who could spiritually read it. The Baptiser with the Spirit would Himself be so fully baptised with the Spirit coming upon and dwelling in Him, that to the spiritual eye it would take visual form and be seen "as a dove descending from heaven."

**Am I come.**—Better, *came.*

(32, 33) In these verses the Evangelist again makes prominent the solemn witness of John, giving the process by which conviction had come to his own mind.

(32) **I saw.**—Better, *I have seen,* or *beheld.* The vision is in its result ever present, and is all-conclusive evidence. (Comp. the words in their historic setting, Matt. iii. 16, Note.)

(34) **And I saw and bare record.**—Better, *and I have seen and have borne witness,* as in verse 32. The result of personal conviction was, that he forthwith testified to others, and continued to do so until the present. One of the sayings taught to his scholars was, "He was (existed) before me." The revelation of the baptism and the voice heard from heaven (Matt. iii. 17) has given to this its true meaning. Teacher has now learnt, and learner is now taught, that Jesus is this pre-existent Being, the Messiah, the Son of God.

(35) **Again the next day after John stood.**—Better, *The next day again John was standing.* The description is of a scene present to the mind, and by one of the two disciples (verse 40). The "again" refers to verse 29.

**Two of his disciples.**—There is no reason for thinking that these were absent on the previous day, and that the testimony is specially repeated for them. Rather it is that, in that band of disciples too, there is an inner circle of those who, because they can receive more, are taught more. They had heard the words before, it may be had talked together about them, at least in individual thought had tried to follow them, and now they have come to the Teacher again. Can we doubt what questions fill the heart or shape themselves in word? He had passed through their struggle from darkness into light. There is a Presence with them which he now knows, and before which his own work must cease. The passing voice is no longer needed now that the abiding Word has come. Can we doubt what his answer is?

(36) **And looking upon.**—Better, *and he looked upon Jesus as He was walking, and saith.* The word "looked upon" expresses a fixed, earnest gaze. (Comp. verse 42; Matt. xix. 26; Mark x. 21, 27; &c.) At this look, all the old thoughts in their fulness come crowding back. Yes. It is He. "Behold the Lamb of God!"

(37) The disciples understand the words as the teacher meant them. There is no word cutting the link between himself and them; that would have been hard to speak, hard to hear. There is no word bidding them follow Jesus; that cannot be needed.

(38) **Jesus turned, and saw them following.**—They follow wishing, and yet not daring, to question Him. He sees this, and seeks to draw them forth by Himself asking the first question. They are not prepared for this question, and wish for more than a passing interview. They inquire, "Where dost thou sojourn?" "Where are you staying for the night?" They will visit Him and ask the many things they seek. They address Him as "Rabbi," placing themselves in the position of His scholars; but they have not yet learnt all that John had taught them of His office. The title is natural from them, for it was the then current title of a revered teacher, and one that John's disciples applied to him (chap. iii. 26); but the writer remembers it was

dwellest[1] thou? (39) He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.[2] (40) One of the two which heard John *speak*, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

(41) He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.[3] (42) And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.[4]

(43) The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. (44) Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. (45) Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the

[1] Or, *abidest.*

[2] That was two hours before night.

[3] Or, *the Anointed.*

[4] Or, *Peter.*

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a modern word (comp. Matt. xxiii. 7, 8), known to Jews only since the days of Hillel (president of the Sanhedrin about B.C. 30), not likely to be known to Greeks at all, and he therefore translates it, as he does Messias and Cephas in this same section.

(39) **Come and see.**—They think of a visit later, it may be, on the following day. He bids them come at once. We know not where. We have no hint of any words spoken. It was the sacred turning-point of the writer's own life, and its incidents are fixed in a depth of thought and feeling that no human eye may penetrate. But he remembers the very hour. It was as we should say four o'clock in the afternoon (see marg.), for there is no sufficient reason for thinking that the Babylonian method of counting the hours, usual at Ephesus as at Jerusalem, is departed from in this Gospel.

(40) **One of the two.**—The Evangelist will even here draw the veil over his own identity (see *Introduction*). The one is Andrew, even now marked out as brother of the better-known Simon Peter. On these names comp. Note on Matt. x. 2—4; but it should be observed here, that on this first day, as the earnest of the harvest to come, we have the two pairs of brothers, the sons of Zebedee (comp. next verse), and sons of Jonas, who are ever leaders in the apostolic band.

[(2) JESUS MANIFESTS HIMSELF TO INDIVIDUALS (chaps. i. 41—ii. 11):

(*a*) *To the first disciples—the witness of man* (verses 41—51);

(*b*) *At Cana of Galilee—the witness of nature* (verses 1—11).]

(41) **He first findeth his own brother.**—The probable explanation of this verse, and the only one which gives an adequate meaning to "first" and "his own," is that each of the two disciples in the fulness of his fresh joy went to seek his own brother, that Andrew found Peter first, and that John records this, and by the form in which he does so implies, but does not state, that he himself found James. To have stated this would have been to break through the personal reserve which he imposed upon himself. (Comp. Matt. iv. 18—21; Mark i. 16—19; Luke v. 1—10.)

**We have found.**—Implying a previous seeking, and that both were under the impulse of the general movement leading men to expect the Messiah. It is implied, too, that Simon was near, and therefore probably a hearer of the Baptist.

**Messias.**—The Hebrew form of the name occurs in the New Testament only here and in chap. iv. 25, in both cases in a vivid picture of events fixed in the memory. Elsewhere, John, as the other sacred writers, uses the LXX. translation, "Christ," and even here he adds it (comp., *e.g.*, in this chap. verses 20 and 25). Both words mean "anointed" (see margin, and comp. Ps. xlv. 8).

(42) **Beheld.**—See Note on verse 29.

**A Stone.**—Better, *Peter*, as in margin. The word means a stone, but the writer translated for Greek, not for English readers. The rule of the previous verse, which places the Greek word in the text and the English word in the margin, should be followed here.

**Cephas.**—The word occurs only in this place in the Gospels, elsewhere in the New Testament only in St. Paul (1 Cor. and Gal.). Remembering the general significance of Hebrew names, the changes in the Old Testament as of Abram, Sarai, and Jacob, and among these first disciples as of James and John (Mark iii. 16, 18), all these names of Peter seem meant to characterise the man,—"Thou art now Hearer, the Son of Jehovah's Grace; thou shalt be called and be a Rock-man." (Comp. Note on Matt. xvi. 17.)

(43) **The day following,** that is, the fourth day from the inquiry by the Sanhedrin (see verses 29, 35, 43).

**Findeth Philip.**—Just as he was going forth from his lodging of the previous night (verse 40). Philip is mentioned in the other Gospels only in the lists of the Twelve. The touches of character are all found in St. John. (Comp. chaps. vi. 5; xii. 21; xiv. 3.)

**Follow me.**—This command, so full of meaning, is never used in the Gospels except as spoken by our Lord Himself, and is addressed to but one outside the circle of the Apostles, the rich young man whom Jesus loved (Matt. xix. 21; Mark x. 21). In other parts of the New Testament it is used but once, in the words of the angel to Peter (Acts xii. 8). We cannot, therefore, limit the words to an invitation to accompany Him on that day's walk, though this is included, and in that walk from Bethania to Bethsaida there came the revelation which made the "Follow Me" a power binding for the whole of life. (Comp. Matt. viii. 22.)

(44) **Of** (or rather, *from*) **Bethsaida,** is added as one of the minute touches of local knowledge which give to this Gospel the colour and vividness that an eye-witness only could impart. It explains the meeting. Philip was going home, and Bethsaida was on the way which Jesus would naturally take from Bethania to Cana (chap. ii. 1, 2). It explains, too, the process by which Philip passed from Messianic hope to a full belief in the Christ. He was a fellow townsman of Andrew and Peter. These two had talked together of ancient prophecy and future expectation. One had announced to the other in striking language, "We have *found* the Messias," and it is with the same word that Philip tells the good news to Nathanael. This "Bethsaida of Galilee," as it is called in describing Philip in chap. xii. 21, is thus distinguished from the Bethsaida Julias, which was on the eastern side of the lake. (See Jos. *Ant.* xviii. 2, § 1, and comp. Note on Luke ix. 10.)

(45) **Philip findeth Nathanael.**—See verses 41 and 44. Nathanael is the Hebrew of the Greek word

law,[a] and the prophets,[b] did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. (46) And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. (47) Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! (48) Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. (49) Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. (50) Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. (51) And he saith unto him,

[a] Gen. 49. 10; Deut. 18. 18.
[b] Isa. 4. 2.

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Theodorus, God's gift. The former is found in Num. i. 8; 1 Chron. ii. 14. The latter is preserved in the names Theodore and Dorothea. He belonged to the town to which Jesus was going (Cana of Galilee, chap. xxi. 2). Philip then probably went with Jesus and found Nathanael at or near Cana (verse 48). He is, perhaps, the same person as Bartholomew; but on this, see chap. xxi. 2, and Note on Matt. x. 3. The more formal statement of the proof in this case, as compared with that of the two brothers (verse 41), agrees with the general character of Philip and with the less close relationship.

**Of Nazareth.**—Better, *from* Nazareth. Nothing can be argued from these words, or those which follow, as to ignorance of the fact of, or the events attending, the birth at Bethlehem. It is to be noted that the words are Philip's, not the writer's. Very possibly, one who had been in the company of Jesus for a few hours only was then unacquainted with these incidents. In any case he expresses the common belief of the neighbourhood and the time, and it is an instance of St. John's dramatic accuracy that he gives the words as they were spoken, and does not attempt to interpret them by later events or by his own knowledge. (Comp. chaps. vii. 42, 52; viii. 53, *et al.*)

(46) The question is not, "Can the Messiah come out of Nazareth," but "Can there any good thing come?" The question is asked by an inhabitant of a neighbouring village who looks upon the familiar town with something of local jealousy and scorn; but the form of the question would seem to point to an ill repute in reference to its people. The place is unknown to earlier history, and is not mentioned even in Josephus; but what we find in Mark vi. 6 and Luke iv. 29 agrees with Nathanael's opinion. (For account of the town, comp. Note on Luke i. 26.)

**Come and see** expresses the fulness of his own conviction. An interview had brought certainty to his own mind. It would do so likewise to that of his friend.

(47) **Jesus saw Nathanael coming.**—Nathanael is at once willing that his prejudice should give way before the force of truth. He is coming, when the look directed towards others rests also upon him. It finds the character which it tests earnest and honest. What gave rise to the form in which this is expressed is not stated. There is clearly some unexpressed link with the history of Jacob. The word for "guile" is the same word as the LXX. word for "subtlety" in Gen. xxviii. 35. The thought then is, "Behold one who is true to the name of Israel, and in whom there is nothing of the Jacob" (Gen. xxviii. 36). There is something in the words which comes as a revelation to Nathanael. Were they a proof that the Presence before whom he stood read to the very depths of his own thought? Under the shade of a tree, where Jews were accustomed to retire for meditation and prayer, had the Old Testament history of Jacob been present to his mind? Was he too "left alone," and did he "prevail with God?" And does he now hear the inmost thought expressed in words, carrying certainty to his soul, and giving him too the victory of seeing God "face to face with life preserved?" (Gen. xxxiii. 24).

(48) The natural explanation of the verse seems to be that Nathanael was at his own house when Philip called him to hear the glad news of the Messiah. The words rendered "under the fig-tree" include the going there and being there. It was *the* fig-tree of his own garden (1 Kings iv. 25; Mic. iv.; Zec. iii. 10) where, and not at the corners of the streets, or to be seen of men, he was in the honesty of his heart praying to God. Unseen as he thought by any eye, he was seen by Him to whose coming every true Israelite looked, and the answer to the true thought and prayer was then as ever close at hand; but at hand, in the human form in which men find it so hard to read the Divine, and in the ordinary events in which men find it hard to realise God. A travelling Rabbi! He is the Messiah. From Nazareth the All Good cometh! This meeting, then, was not the first. There was an actual Messianic Presence in Nathanael's inmost thought. He is now startled, and asks, "Whence knowest Thou me?" We have never seen each other before. But in the deepest sense, the Messiah was there; "when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee."

(49) **Thou art the Son of God.**—The recognition begets recognition. That strange Presence he had felt as a spiritual power quickening hope and thought, making prophets' words living truths, filling with a true meaning the current beliefs about the Messiah;—yes; it goes through and through him again now. It is there before him. "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel." (For these titles as existing in the Messianic expectation of the day, comp. chaps. xi. 27; xii. 13, 15; Matt. xxv. 63; Mark iii. 11; v. 7. See also Note on the quotation from Zech. in Matt. xxi. 5.)

(50) **Believest thou.**—This is not necessarily a question, and a fuller sense is obtained by taking it as an assertion. (Comp. the same word in chaps. xv. 31, and xx. 29.) On this evidence *thou believest;* the use of the faith-faculty strengthens it. Thou shalt see greater things than these.

(51) **Verily, verily.**—This is the first use of this formula of doubled words, which is not found in the New Testament outside St. John's Gospel. They are always spoken by our Lord, and connected with some deeper truth, to which they direct attention. They represent, in a reduplicated form, the Hebrew "Amen," which is common in the Old Testament as an adverb, and twice occurs doubled (Num. v. 22; Neh. viii. 6). In the Hebraic style of the Apocalypse the word is a proper name of "the faithful and true witness" (Rev. iii. 14).

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

A.D. 30.

CHAPTER II.—(1) And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: (2) and both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. (3) And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They

**I say unto you . . . ye shall see.**—The earlier words have been addressed to Nathanael. The truth expressed in these holds for all disciples, and is spoken to all who were then present—to Andrew and John and Peter and James (verse 41) and Philip, as well as to Nathanael.

**Hereafter** is omitted by several ancient authorities, including the Sinaitic and Vatican MSS., but there is early evidence for the insertion, and as the omission removes a difficulty in the interpretation, it is probably to be traced to this source. If retained, the better rendering is, *henceforth, from this time onwards.*

**Heaven opened.**—More exactly, *the heaven opened,* made and continuing open. The thought was familiar, for Psalmist and Prophet had uttered it to God in the prayers, "Bow Thy heavens, O Lord, and come down" (Ps. cxliv. 5); "O that Thou wouldest rend the heavens, that Thou wouldest come down" (Isa. lxiv. 6). The Presence then before Nathanael was the answer to these longings of the soul.

**The angels of God ascending and descending.**—Referring again to the history of Jacob (Gen. xxviii. 12, 13).

**The Son of man.**—This is probably the first time that this phrase, which became the ordinary title used by our Lord of Himself, fell from His lips; but it meets us more than seventy times in the earlier Gospels, and has been explained in the Note on Matt. viii. 20. It will be enough to observe here that it is suggested by, and is in part opposed to and in part the complement of, the titles used by Nathanael. He could clothe the Messianic idea only in Jewish titles, "Son of God," "King of Israel." The true expression of the idea was not Hebrew, but human, "the Son of Man," "the Word made flesh;" *the* Son, the true representative of the race, the Second Adam, in whom all are made alive; the Son of *Man.* The word is ἄνθρωπος, not ἀνήρ; *homo,* not *vir.* It is man as man; not Jew as holier than Greek; not free-man as nobler than bond-man; not man as distinct from woman: but humanity in all space and time and circumstance; in its weakness as in its strength; in its sorrows as in its joys; in its death as in its life. And here lies the explanation of the whole verse. The ladder from earth to heaven is in the truth "The Word was made flesh." In that great truth heaven was, and has remained, opened. From that time onwards messengers were ever going backward and forward between humanity and its God. The cry of every erring and helpless child to its Father for guidance and strength; the silent appeal of the wronged and down-trodden to the All-Just Avenger; the fears and hopes of the soul burdened by the unbearable weight of sin, and casting itself on the mercy of the Eternal Love—all these are borne by messengers who always behold the face of God (Matt. xviii. 10). And every light that falls upon the path, and strength that nerves the moral frame; every comfort to the heart smarting beneath its wrong; every sense of forgiveness, atonement, peace—all these like angels descend that ladder coming from heaven to earth. Ascending precedes descending, as in the vision of old. Heaven's messengers are ever ready to descend when earth's will bid them come. The revelation of the fullest truth of God is never wanting to the heart that is open to receive it. The ladder is set up upon the earth, but it reaches to heaven, and the Lord stands above it. It goes down to the very depths of man's weakness, wretchedness, and sin; and he may lay hold of it, and step by step ascend it. In the Incarnation, Divinity took human form on earth; in the Ascension, Humanity was raised to heaven.

## II.

(1) **The third day**—*i.e.,* from the last note of time in chap. i. 43, giving one clear day between the call of Philip and the day of the marriage.

**Cana of Galilee** has been identified with both *Kânet el-Jelîl,* or *Khurbet Kânet,* and *Kefr Kenna.* The monks of Nazareth and local tradition claim the latter place as the scene of the miracle, but this tradition has not been traced earlier than the seventeenth century, and the best modern authorities do not accept it. (But comp., in support of Kefr Kenna, Zeller in *Report of Palestine Exploration Fund,* iii. 1869.) Kânet el-Jelîl, on the other hand, is the rendering of the Arabic version, and Sæwulf, as early as A.D. 1103, describes it as the place "where the Lord turned water into wine at the wedding" (*Early Travels in Palestine,* p. 47). The strength of the argument is in the identity of name in the original, whereas Kenna is quite distinct. Travellers describe it as an obscure, uninhabited village in ruins. They were formerly shown the house where the marriage took place here, and even the water-pots, but these are now shown at the rival Kefr Kenna. The ruins are on the side of a hill looking over the plain of *El Buttauf,* rather more than six miles to the N. or N.E. of Nazareth, and so answering Sæwulf's description. It is some fifteen or sixteen miles from Tiberias and Capernaum, and six or seven more from Tell-Anihje. (Comp. chap. i. 28.) The writer knows the place by its common name Cana of Galilee, by which it was distinguished from the Cana of the tribe of Asher, S.E. from Tyre (Josh. xix. 28). The mother of Jesus was already there, as a relation or friend, assisting in the preparations.

(2) **Was called,** or invited, after His arrival in Cana; but we may still think of Him, in whom purpose and result were one, as coming to Cana for the marriage. Nathanael would have known of it, and was perhaps also connected with one of the families. It is quite in accord with Eastern hospitality that the disciples, who are now spoken of under this collective title, and formed with their Rabbi a band of seven, should be bidden with Him.

(3) **When they wanted wine.**—Better, *the wine having failed.*

**They have no wine.**—The question "What was the import of this remark?" has been often asked, and very variously answered. And yet the answer does not seem far to seek. The next verses fix its meaning as the expectation of an outcome of supernatural power. This is quite in harmony with the mother's hopes and have no wine. (4) Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. (5) His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do *it*. (6) And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. (7) Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. (8) And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare *it*. (9) When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not

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musings, without any previous miracle on which to base them (verse 11). For many long years she had kept in her heart the Son's words and deeds (Luke ii. 51). She must have heard of John the Baptist's witness, of the events of the Baptism six weeks now past, and on that very day every hope must have started into new life, as she heard from those who came with Him how conviction had seized upon their own minds. To cause the increase of meal, and prevent the failure of the cruse of oil (1 Kings xvii. 14), was within the power of the prophet whom they expected as herald of the Messiah. Here was an unexpected need, caused, it may be, by the presence of Himself and followers at that festival. Can He not, will He not, supply the need, and prove Himself indeed the Christ?

(4) **Woman, what have I to do with thee?**—This is an old battle-ground between Protestant and Romanist expositors. The former have found in each clause of the sentence a condemnation of Mariolatry; the latter have sought explanations not inconsistent with their faith and practice. It may be hoped that the day is now past, when anything other than thoughts of reverence and honour is to be connected with the title "Woman," least of all in the words of One who claimed as His own highest dignity Sonship of, identity with, humanity; and who was here addressing the mother to whom He had been subject, and from whom His own humanity had been derived. Were proof needed of the tenderness which underlies the word as used by Him, it would be found in the other instances which the Gospels supply. It is spoken only to the Syro-Phœnician whose faith is great (Matt. xv. 28); to the daughter of Abraham loosed from her infirmity (Luke xiii. 12); and, in this Gospel, to the Samaritan embracing the higher faith (chap. iv. 21); perhaps to the sinner whom He does not condemn (chap. viii. 10); to the same mother from the cross (chap. xix. 26); and to Mary Magdalene in tears (chap. xx. 13, 15).

Still the second part of the sentence declares beyond all doubt that the two regarded His life-work from stand-points so different that there is nothing common between them. It is literally, *What is that to me and to thee?* The parallels for the form of the question are Josh. xx. 24; Judg. xi. 12; 1 Sam. xvi. 10; 1 Kings xvii. 18; 2 Kings iii. 13; and the thrice-recorded question of the demoniac (Matt. viii. 29; Mark i. 24; Luke viii. 28). The real parallel is in this Gospel in chap. vii. 6. Mother and brethren alike regarded life in its events; for Him it is an unchanging principle. For them, action is determined by the outer stimulus; for Him, by the eternal will of the Father. Their hour is always ready; His is the development of a law. His answer is another form of that question kept in her heart: "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" but "they understood not the saying which He spake unto them" (Luke ii. 49).

**Mine hour is not yet come**—*i.e.*, the hour for My being openly manifested as the Messiah. (Comp. especially verse 16; chaps. viii. 20; xii. 23; xvii. 1.)

(5) **Whatsoever he saith unto you.**—His answer has not repelled her. She still believes and expects. Her command to the servants confirms the opinion that the marriage is of some member of the family. This opinion has taken strange traditional forms; one being that here, too, the Evangelist casts a veil over an incident in his own life, and that he was himself the bridegroom; but that, guided by the miracle, he from that moment left all and followed Christ. The Prologue to St. John attributed to Jerome says that "John, wishing to marry, was called from the wedding by our Lord" (Trench *On Miracles*, p. 98). See Matt. xix. 29 *et seq.*, and Luke xiv. 26.

(6) **Waterpots**, or *pitchers*, like to but larger than the vessels used for carrying water, as in chap. iv. 28. These were placed in the outer court, away from the guest-chamber, for the governor of the feast is ignorant of the circumstances (verse 9). It is natural that an eye-witness should remember the number and know roughly their size. There were six of them, containing about twenty gallons apiece; but hidden meanings referring to the number or the quantity are brought to the text, not derived from it. The measure rendered "firkin" is *metrētes*, which is used for the Hebrew, "bath" in 2 Chron. iv. 5. This (Jos. *Ant.* viii. 2, § 9) gives nearly nine gallons as the value of the "firkin," which multiplied by two or three gives the contents of each pitcher as from about eighteen to twenty-seven gallons; or, approximately, from 100 to 150 gallons for the whole. Our own word "firkin" is probably "a little fourth," and equal to nine gallons, or the fourth of a barrel (comp. Tierce, which is one-third). It is used only here in the Bible.

(7) **Fill the waterpots.**—It is implied that the pitchers were wholly or in part empty, the water in them having been used for the ablutions before the feast. The persons ordered are the servants (verse 5). "Up to the brim" marks the willing care with which the order was obeyed, and an expectation through the household of some work to be wrought.

(8) **Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast.**—A vessel was let down into the pitcher, and was then carried to the ruler of the feast, who would distribute the wine in it to the guests. *Ruler* rather than "governor." The same English word should be used throughout the two verses. What exact office is denoted by the Greek word is uncertain, as it occurs nowhere else in the Bible, and is very rare in the classical authors. The chief English commentators (Alford, Wordsworth, Trench) are agreed that he was chosen by the guests from among their own number, but this opinion has not commanded the general assent of scholars; and there seems more reason to think that the person intended is what we should call the "head-waiter," whose duty it was to taste the viands and wines, to arrange the tables and couches, and to be generally responsible for the feast.

(9) **Water that was made wine.**—Better, *water that had become wine.* At what moment did the trans-

whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, (10) and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: *but* thou hast kept the good wine until now. (11) This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

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formation take place? What water became wine? The text itself does not speak of "water now become wine" until the ruler of the feast tasted it, and immediately afterwards speaks of it as "water," when the servants drew it, for the plain reference of the parenthesis in brackets is to the drawing of the water from the pitchers (verse 8), not to a previous drawing of water to place in the pitchers, which has not been even hinted at. Unless, then, there is a strong reason which does not appear in these words, this simple meaning is the true one;—that the change took place during or after the drawing from the pitchers, and that that portion only was changed which was carried to the ruler and actually needed to supply the guests. The reason based upon the mention of the number and contents of the pitchers (verse 6) is certainly not a strong one. It is quite natural to find these stated in the picturesque style of this Gospel, and there is no care to give more than a rough estimate of the size from a remembrance either of these pitchers or of pitchers generally used for this purpose. There is more force in the general impression derived from verse 7. It may be fairly asked why was more water placed in readiness than was needed? But the pitchers would be in any case re-filled for ablutions after the feast. They were at hand, meeting the eye. All possibility of collusion is thus excluded. They had been used not long before; they would very soon be used again. The filling of all leaves to the servants the choice of one or more from which to draw. There is an unfailing potential supply; it becomes an actual supply only when needed and appropriated by human want. This, as every supernatural work, is made to depend upon faith. There is no demand for this faith in filling *water*-pots with *water*; it is otherwise when they draw it, and bear it in the usual tankard to the ruler, in answer to the demand for *wine*. Here, as everywhere in divine action, there is an economy in the use of power. There is no miracle of "luxury" or "waste" or "excess." These cavils of the higher criticism are—like the additions of expositors, as that the feast lasted for a week or more, or their perversions, as that the wine was in no sense intoxicating—superstructures without a foundation.

(10) **When men have well drunk.**—The same Greek word is used in the LXX. in Gen. xliii. 34, and rendered in the Authorised version "were merry;" but its general use in the Old Testament, as in classical writers, and its invariable use in the New Testament (Matt. xxiv. 49; Acts ii. 15; 1 Cor. xi. 21; Eph. v. 18; 1 Thess. v. 7; Rev. xvii. 6, are the only passages) is to express the state of drunkenness. Our translators have shrunk from that rendering here, though it was before them in the "When men be dronke," of Tyndall and Cranmer. The physical meaning of the word is to saturate with moisture, as we say, to be *drenched*, which is the same word as *drunk*. There is clearly no reference to the present feast. It is a coarse jest of the ruler's, the sort of remark that forms part of the stock in trade of a hired manager of banquets.

(11) **This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee,** or, more exactly, *This did Jesus in Cana of Galilee as the beginning of His signs.* The form of the sentence makes it certain that it is the absolutely first and not the first in Cana which is meant.

It is important to note here that St. John uses only once, and that in our Lord's test of the courtier, and connected with "sign" (chap. iv. 48), the word which represents "miracle," "wonder," "portent," and that he nowhere uses the word which represents "powers" or "mighty works." For him they are simply "works," and these "works" are "signs." He thinks of our Lord as the agent in all creation, and the source of all life (chap. i. 2, 3); but this being so, no display of power impresses him, and no wonder startles him. All is the natural "work" of the divine worker; but like Himself, every work is also a word. It speaks to him who hath ears to hear. It is a "sign" to him who can spiritually interpret. That at His will water became wine, is as natural as that, by that will, the rain passing through earth and vine and grape should become wine. From his point of view both are equally explicable; from any other, both are in ultimate analysis equally inexplicable. "Voici le vin qui tombe du ciel!" is the French peasant's expression for the one (comp. Trench's note).

> "The conscious water saw its God, and blushed,"
> ["Nympha pudica Deum vidit, et erubuit"]

is the English poet's expression for the other.

This gives the key, then, to the selection of "miracles" by St. John, and to their interpretation. He gives those which mark stages of fuller teaching. They are "signs" of a new revelation, and lead to a higher faith. What was the fuller teaching in this first sign? The heart must seek to read it. Words can only seek to guide. Would not those Jews remember the first miracle of Moses, and later, if not then, see here the contrast between the Law which came by Moses, and the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ (chap. i. 17)? Would not those exact observers of traditional rites see a living principle growing out of the rite practised at every meal (comp. Mark vii. 3, Note), and feel that it is the letter which killeth, it is the Spirit which giveth life? Would not those who thought of Him as the Messianic King of Israel read in His presence at the festal tide of family life the meaning of the claim to be Son of Humanity? Would not the followers of the hermit John learn that Christianity's message is not for the wilderness, but for the hearts of men; and that its life is not one of seclusion from the world, but of moral power in it (chap. xvii. 15)? Would not those who had heard the Baptist's record, and had felt and uttered their own convictions, hear now the secret voice of Nature joining in the witness? Some such thoughts as these came to them in a fulness of power they had not known before. It was to them as a new manifestation of His glory, and the disciples again believed.

The other signs recorded in this Gospel are, the Healing of the ruler's son (chap. iv. 46—54); and of the impotent man at Bethesda (chap. v. 1—9); the Feeding of the five thousand (chap vi. 5—59); the Walking on the sea (chap. vi. 15—21); the Giving of sight to the man born blind (chap. ix. 1—7); the Raising of Lazarus (chap. xi.); the Draught of Fishes (chap. xxi. 1—8). See Notes on these passages, and on chap. xx. 30.

(12) After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.

(13) And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, (14) and found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: (15) and when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; (16) and said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. (17) And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.[a]

[a] Ps. 69. 9.

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[(3) JESUS MANIFESTS HIMSELF PUBLICLY (chaps. ii. 12—iv. 54):
- (*a*) *In Jerusalem—the Temple* (chap. ii. 12—22);
- (*b*) *In Jerusalem—the city* (chaps. ii. 23—iii. 21);
  - *Nicodemus: The new birth* (verses 1—8);
  - *Belief* (verses 9—15);
  - *Judgment* (verses 16—21);
- (*c*) *In Judæa* (chap. iii. 22—36). *The Baptist.*]

(12) **After this he went down to Capernaum.**—For the position of Capernaum comp. Note on Matt. iv. 13. It was on the shore of the lake of Tiberias, and He must have gone "down" to it from any locality among the hills of Galilee. The words do not imply that they went to Capernaum direct from Cana. The "after this" allows of a return to Nazareth, and the mention of the "brethren" makes such a return probable. The place of this sojourn in the order of events belongs to the narrative of the earlier Gospels, and here, as elsewhere, questions which recur are treated when they are first mentioned. To deal with them on each occurrence would be to save the trouble of reference at the cost of much space; and this would be ill-saved; the spiritual profit arising from constant reference is one which no earnest student of the Gospels could desire to lose. He will wish to study every event in that life in every word which records it. (Comp. Matt. iv. 13 *et seq.*, and ix. 1; Mark iii. 21—31, and vi. 3; Luke iv. 16—30). For the "brethren of the Lord," see Note on Matt. xiii. 55.

(13) **And the passover, a feast of the Jews.**—Here, again, we are on common ground with the earlier Gospels. They place a cleansing of the Temple at the close of our Lord's ministry at the only Passover which comes within the scope of their narrative. The subject has been dealt with in Notes on Matt. xxi. 12 *et seq.* (Comp. also *Introduction: The Chronological Harmony of the Gospels*, p. xxxv.) The careful reader will not fail to observe the graphic touches peculiar to this narrative—the money-changers *sitting*, the sacrificial animals, the making of the scourge, the money poured out, the order to remove the doves which could not be driven out. We feel all through in the presence of an eye-witness. It is worth remembering that on the eve of the Passover the head of every family carefully collected all the leaven in the house, and there was a general cleansing. He was doing in His Father's house, it may be, what was then being done in every house in Jerusalem. The remark will be seen to have an important bearing on the question of the repetition of the cleansing.

(15) **And the sheep, and the oxen.**—For this read, *both the sheep and the oxen.* The change is of only one word, but it gives an entirely different sense. The driving out with the scourge was not of "all (men) and sheep and oxen," but of "all," *i.e.*, both sheep and oxen.

(16) **My Father's house.**—Some among those present now (verse 18) may have been present in that same house when He, a lad of twelve years, was there at the Passover, and after questions and answers, higher and deeper than these doctors could grasp, claimed God as His true Father (Luke ii. 49). What that repeated claim meant now must have been clear to all. Their own messengers had brought them John's witness; later reports must have come before, and come with, the crowd of Galilæan pilgrims; the disciples are themselves with Him (verse 17), and their hearts are too full for silence; but there was more than all this. Those expounders of the oracles of God who remembered that Elijah was to come before the day of the Lord, must have remembered, too, that the Lord was to come to this Temple, like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap (Mal. iii. 1—3; iv. 5). That fire was in their midst, and from that Presence buyers and sellers and changers shrunk back in awe, none daring to resist; that cleansing was then taking place, and the Son was claiming the sanctity and reverence due to His Father's house. He has before claimed to be Son of Man. The Messianic title is publicly claimed before the official representatives of the people at the great national festival, in the Temple, at Jerusalem. If, while this scene is fresh is our minds, we think again of the marriage at Cana, we shall feel how different the manifestations are, and that this latter was not, and was not intended to be, a public declaration of His person and work. Now we understand what seemed hard before, that the assertion "Mine hour is not yet come" (verse 4) immediately precedes the first sign. This sign was at a family gathering known only to few, probably not to all who were there, for "the ruler knew not whence it was" (verse 9), and no effect is described as resulting from it, except that the little band of disciples believed (verse 11). The "forth," which in the English version seems to mark an effect upon others, is not found in the Greek. It is within the circle of the other Gospel narratives, but is included in none of them. It left no such impression in the mind of St. Peter as to lead him to include it in the Gospel of his interpreter, St. Mark, or upon Mary herself as to lead her to include it in the answers she must have given to the questions of St. Luke. It was, indeed, the first sign in Cana of Galilee, but the scene before us is the announcement to the world.

(17) **Was written . . . hath eaten me up.**—More literally, *is written . . . shall eat me up.* The verse is full of interest in many ways. It gives us the thought of the disciples at the time (comp. verse 22) which could be known only to one of their number. It shows us what we too seldom realise in reading the New Testament, that the Jewish mind was filled to overflowing with thoughts of the Old Testament. The child was taught to say by heart large portions of the Law and Psalms and Prophets, and they formed the

(18) Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? (19) Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple,[a] and in three days I will raise it up. (20) Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? (21) But he spake of the temple of his body. (22) When

[a] Matt. 26. 61.

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very texture of the mind, ready to pass into conscious thought whenever occasion suggested. With the exception of the 22nd Psalm, no part of the Old Testament is so frequently referred to in the New as the psalm from which these words are taken (lxix. 9), and yet that psalm could not have been in its historic meaning Messianic (see, *e.g.*, verses 5, 22—26). This reference to it gives us, then, their method of interpretation. Every human life is typical. The persecution without reason, the wrong heaped upon the innocent, the appeal to and trust in Jehovah, the song of thanksgiving from him whose parched throat was weary of calling—all this was true of some representative sufferer of earlier days, and we may hear in it almost certainly the voice of Jeremiah; but it was true of him in that he was a forerunner of *the* representative sufferer. The darker features of the psalm belong to the individual; the Life which sustains in all, and the Light which illumines in all, was even then in the world, though men knew Him not. The words of Jeremiah are Messianic, because his life—like every noble, self-forgetting, others' sorrow bearing, man and God loving life—was itself Messianic.

The change of tense, from the past of the Psalmist to the future here, is itself significant. The words were true of the inner burning which consumed the prophet-priest. They come to the heart as true, with a fuller truth, of Christ's spirit burning with righteous indignation, and cast down by deepest sorrow; but shrinking not from the painful task, which leaves its mark falling on that face as the shadow of a deeper darkness. They are to be, in a deeper sense, truer still.

(18) **Then answered the Jews.**—Comp. for the meaning of "the Jews" chap. i. 19; and for their question, Matt. xxi. 23. The Mosaic legislation contained a warning against the efficiency of the test by signs (Deut. xiii. 1—3), but it was of the essence of Pharisaism to cling to it (Matt. xii. 38; 1 Cor. i. 22). It supplied an easy means of rejecting the moral conviction. A sign can only be evidence to the mind open to read the underlying truth. For "an evil and adulterous generation" it has no voice, and they can, after the feeding of the thousands, still demand "What sign showest Thou?" (chap. vi. 30). There are bigots of incredulity. Knowledge is dependent upon action and will (comp. chap. vii. 17). There is a mental condition which no evidence can convince, for it can always demand more. "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Luke xvi. 31).

(19) Here, as in Matt. xii. 38, a sign is given referring to His resurrection. The sign is in its nature an enigma, meaningless to him who does not seek to understand it, but full of meaning for him who earnestly examines into the thing signified, and in such a form as impresses itself on the memory and educates the moral powers. We have had an example of this enigmatic teaching in chap. i. 15, 27, 30. We shall meet with others. (Comp. iv. and vi.; xvi. 25.) The enigma turns in the present case upon the double sense of the word "temple." It meant the sacred shrine of the Deity, the Holy and Most Holy place, as distinct from the wider Temple area. But the true shrine of the Deity was the body of the Incarnate Word. The Temple of wood and stone was but the representative of the Divine Presence. That Presence was then actually in their midst. They had no reverence for the one; for, like its outer courts, it had become a house of merchandise, and was fast becoming a den of thieves. This very demand for an outward sign, while all around them feel a spiritual power, shows they have as little reverence for the other. They will destroy the real shrine; the shrine of wood and stone even will not be left to represent a Presence no longer among them. He will raise up the temple of His body the third day, and in that resurrection will be the foundation stone of the spiritual temple for the world. The use of the word "temple" by the Jews in this double sense is attested by their interpretation of the Old Testament. We have an example of the use of "tabernacle" in a parallel sense in chap. i. 14 (comp. 2 Pet. i. 13, 14), and the full idea of a spiritual worship and presence in chap. iv. 21—24. The sign may have been suggested by the double thought then present—the Jews destroying the sanctity of the material Temple, the disciples seeing in Him one consumed by zeal for it. (Comp. 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17.)

(20) They profess to seek a sign for evidence; they use it for cavil.

**Forty and six years was this temple in building.**—It is implied that it was not then finished. The date of the completion is given by Josephus (*Ant.* xx. 9, § 7) as A.D. 64. The same author gives the eighteenth year of the reign of Herod the Great (Nisan 734—Nisan 735, A.U.C.) as the commencement of the renewal of the Temple of Zerubbabel (*Ant.* xv. 11, § 1). This would give A.U.C. 781—782, *i.e.*, A.D. 28—29, as the date of the cleansing. In another passage Josephus gives the month Kislev A.U.C. 734, as the date of the festival connected with the building of the Temple (*Ant.* xiv. 16, § 4). This would fix our present date as the Passover of A.U.C. 781, *i.e.*, A.D. 28. St. Luke furnishes us with an independent date for the commencement of the ministry of John the Baptist. If we count the "fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius (comp. Note on Luke iii. 1) from the commencement of his first reign with Augustus (A.U.C. 765, *i.e*, A.D. 12), this date will be A.U.C. 780, *i.e.*, A.D. 27. The present Passover was in the following year, *i.e.*, as before, A.D. 28. The sole reign of Tiberius commenced two years later (A.D. 14), so that while we have certainly no discrepancy between these independent dates, we have probably a very striking coincidence. Its bearing upon the authenticity of the present Gospel is evident.

**Rear it up** represents the same Greek word as "raise up," in the previous verse; but the word fits the double meaning. It is the regular term for raising from the dead; but it is also used of rearing up a building, as, *e.g.*, in 3 Esdras v. 44; Ecclus. xlix. 11.

(21) **But he spake.** — Literally, *was speaking.* This is the solution of the enigma as the disciples read it in the after history. It is remarkable that we have the interpretation of the spiritual temple in Mark xiv. 58 (see Note there, and comp. chap. iv. 21, 23).

(22) **That he had said this unto them.**—The better texts omit "unto them." For the way in which

therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

(23) Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast *day*, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. (24) But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all *men*, (25) and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

A.D. 30.

CHAPTER III.—(1) There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: (2) the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

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the saying, hard to be understood, fixed itself in men's minds, comp. Matt. xxvi. 61; xxvii. 40; Mark xiv. 58; xv. 29; Acts vi. 13. It becomes in the mouth of false witnesses the accusation by means of which its meaning is accomplished. The death on the cross is the destruction of the Temple, but it is not unaccompanied by the rent veil; the two meanings are linked together.

It fixed itself, too, on the disciples' minds; but weeks, months, years, did not cast any light upon it until the Resurrection. These passages of those familiar Old Testament writings then came to men who had been slow of heart to see them, with the quickening power of a new life. They saw that Christ ought to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory. They saw in Moses and the Prophets the things concerning Him, and they believed in a new and higher sense the written and the spoken word. (Comp. Luke xxiv. 26 *et seq.*)

(23) **In the feast day.**—Omit the word "day" after feast. The italics show that there is no word to express it in the Greek, and it gives the impression of one day, whereas the feast extended over a week. The idea of time, moreover, is not expressed by "in the feast." The sentence means, *When He was in the feast* (engaged in keeping the feast) *at Jerusalem, during the Passover.*

**Many believed.**—The persons are distinct from the official representatives of the nation (verses 18, 19), as the place, Jerusalem, is distinguished from the Temple.

**When they saw the miracles.**—Better, as before, *signs.* The original words imply that their faith was dependent upon the signs which they gazed upon, without entering into their deeper meaning. It was the impulsive response of the moment, not based upon a previous preparation, nor resulting in a present deep conviction. It came far short of the faith of the disciples, who passed from a true knowledge of Moses and the Prophets to a true knowledge of Christ without a sign; but it came far above the disbelief of scribes and Pharisees, who after a sign rejected Him. It was not the prepared good ground bringing forth abundantly; but neither was it the hardened wayside which did not receive the seed at all.

(24) But beneath this shallow surface there is the unbroken ledge of rock. They are easily moved just because they are not deeply moved. The eye which looked at, looked into, others (comp. chap. i. 47 *et seq.*), saw to the very depth of their hearts too, and knew all. It saw in that depth that the true inner man did not believe, did not commit itself to Him; it found not the spiritual receptivity, and there could not therefore be the spiritual revelation. He, on His part, did not commit Himself unto them. (Comp. chap. viii. 31, Note.) Our version gives the correct sense, but it should be noted that "believed" in verse 23, and "commit" here, represent the same Greek word.

(25) **And needed not.**—Better, *and because He needed not.*

**For he knew.**—Better, *for He of Himself knew.* The verse is a wider statement of the general truth of which verse 24 is a particular instance. He did not in that instance need any testimony of spiritual state and character, because He then, as always, read what was in man.

### III.

(1) **There was a man.**—Read, *But there was a man.* Our division of chapters breaks the connection, and the omission of the conjunction leads us to think of the visit of Nicodemus as quite distinct from what has gone before; whereas it really rises out of it (comp. verse 2 with chap. ii. 23).

The name Nicodemus was not uncommon among the Jews, but like Stephen, Philip, Jason, etc., was derived from their intercourse with the Greeks. (Comp. *e.g.*, Demosth. 549, 23, and Jos. *Ant.* xiv. 3, § 2.) Of this particular Nicodemus, we know with certainty nothing more than is told us in this Gospel (chaps. vii. 50; xix. 39). The Talmud mentions a Nakᵉdimon, so called from a miracle performed by him, who was the son of Gorion, and whose real name was Bonai. It also gives the name Bonai as one of the disciples of Jesus. He was one of the three richest Jews when Titus besieged Jerusalem, but his family was reduced to the most abject poverty. So far the Talmud. The inference is that this change of fortune is connected with his becoming a Christian and with the persecution which followed, and he is himself identified with the Nicodemus of the Gospel. We can only say this may be so. The reader who cares for more on the subject will find full references in Lampe, and the extracts from the Talmud translated in Lightfoot. Others may be content to accept this latter writer's conclusion. "It is not worth while to take great pains in a question which is very involved, if we may not also call it useless." (For the "Pharisees," to which sect Nicodemus belonged, comp. chap. i. 24, and Matt. iii. 7.)

**Ruler of the Jews.**—One of the Sanhedrin (comp. chap. i. 19, Note). This is made certain by the position of Nicodemus, in chap. vii. 50.

(2) **By night.**—This has impressed itself upon the writer's mind, so that it becomes part of the description of Nicodemus in chap. xix. 39, and in some MSS. in chap. vii. 50. We have to think of him as having heard the answer of the messengers sent to the Baptist (chap. i. 20 *et seq.*), as present at the cleansing of the Temple, as the witness of miracles in Jerusalem, as by these means convinced that this Teacher had a message from God, and resolved to hear it. But the Sanhedrin had

(3) Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again,[1] he cannot see the kingdom of God. (4) Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? (5) Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot

[1] Or, *from above.*

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officially taken a hostile position, and an individual member of it dare not openly take any other. His own conviction is expressed by his coming to Jesus at all; his fear of public opinion and of the possible exclusion from the synagogue by his coming at night. (Comp. chap. xii. 42, 43.)

**Rabbi.**—The customary title of reverence for a teacher (comp. Note on chap. i. 38), but given here by a technically trained Rabbi to One who had no formal title to it (chap. vii. 15).

**We know that thou art a teacher come from God.**—This explains the title he has used. He does not go beyond this. There has been, as in the case of John the Baptist, sufficient to prove a more than human mission, but with this there has been nothing to meet the common Messianic expectation. Still, if this is a Prophet, working miracles like those of old, and evidently sent from God, He will be able to solve all doubts, and answer the questions pressing on the hearts of men. The plural pronoun expresses nothing more than the general conviction that the power to work miracles was a divine attestation of the teaching (chap. ix. 18, 33). There were, indeed, others in the same mental position as Nicodemus, but none accompanied him; and it is not probable that his visit was known to any of them. The "we" occurs again in our Lord's reply in verse 11, and it may be that both find their true explanation in the fact that this interview took place in the house, and in the presence of John, who had led Nicodemus to come, as he himself had gone, with doubting heart, to the place where Jesus was dwelling (chap. i. 38).

(3) **Jesus answered and said unto him.**—The words of Nicodemus are clearly only a preface to further questions. Jesus at once answers these questions; the answer being, as it frequently is, to the unexpressed thought (comp. *e.g.*, chap. ii. 18). The coming of the Messiah, the Divine Glory, God's Kingdom, these are the thoughts which filled men's minds. These miracles—in what relation did they stand to it? This Teacher—what message from God had He about it?

**Verily, verily, I say unto thee.**—(Comp. chap. i. 51.) The words are in the decisive tone of authority and certainty. "This is God's teaching for thee, teacher as thou thyself art" (verse 10).

**Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**—Our translators have followed the ancient expositors in giving the alternative renderings "born again" and "born from above" (margin). Chrysostom notes the two currents of interpretation in his day; and in our own day the opinions of scholars, whether we count them or weigh them, may be equally claimed for either view. There can be no doubt that the Greek word (ἄνωθεν) is found with both meanings. It is equally certain that St. John elsewhere uses it in the local sense "from above" only (chaps. iii. 31; xix. 11, 23); but these instances are not sufficient to establish an *usus loquendi,* and the sense here, and in verse 7, must be taken in connection with the meaning of the verb. (Comp. the same word in Luke i. 3, "from the very first," and Gal. iv. 9, "again.") What has not, perhaps, been sufficiently noted is, that the Greek word is not the true key to the difficulty, and that its double sense has led men to seek the meaning in a wrong direction. The dialogue was between One who was called and one who really was a Rabbi. The word actually used almost certainly conveyed but one sense, and it is this sense which the Syriac version, coming to us from the second century, and closely connected with the Palestinian dialect of the first century, has preserved. This version reads "from the beginning," "afresh," "anew." This is the sense which St. John wishes to express for his Greek readers, and the word used by him exactly does express it. That the Greek word has another meaning also, which expresses the same thought from another point of view, may have determined its choice. This other point of view was certainly not absent from the circle of the writer's thoughts (comp. chap. i. 13).

On "the kingdom of God," which is of frequent occurrence in the earlier Gospels, but in St. John is found only here and in verse 5, comp. Note on Matt. iii. 2. To "see" the kingdom is, in New Testament usage, equivalent to "enter into the kingdom," verse 5, where indeed some MSS. read "see." (Comp. in this chap. verse 36, and Luke ii. 26; Acts ii. 27; Heb. xi. 5; 1 Pet. iii. 10; Rev. xviii. 7.) The condition of the spiritual vision which can see this kingdom is spiritual life, and this life is dependent on being born anew.

(4) **How can a man be born . . . ?**—Nicodemus understands the words "born again" in the sense given above. The thought is not wholly strange to him. The Rabbis were accustomed to speak of proselytes as children, and the term "new creature" (comp. 2 Cor. v. 17) was in frequent use to express the call of Abraham. But he is himself a child of Abraham, a member of the theocratic kingdom, and is expecting the glory of Messiah's reign. He is a teacher of the Law, a ruler of the chosen people. He is not as a heathen who can be born into the holy nation. The ordinary spiritual sense of the words cannot hold in his case. What can they mean? He does not wilfully misinterpret, for this is opposed to the whole character of the man, nor does he really suppose the physical meaning is intended; but after the method of Rabbinic dialogue, he presses the impossible meaning of the words in order to exclude it, and to draw forth the true meaning. "You cannot mean that a man is to enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born. What is it, then, that you do mean?"

**When he is old** does not necessarily apply to Nicodemus himself. It is the most difficult special case coming under the general term, "a man." In Philo's artificial division of the lifetime, based on that of Hippocrates, the "old man" (γέρων) is one more than fifty-six years (*De Mund. Opif.* § 36). If we understand this of Nicodemus personally, it will make the identification with Nak'dimon (Note on verse 1) barely possible.

(5) Again the words "Verily, verily" (comp. Note on chap i. 51), calling attention to the deeper truth which follows; and again the words of authority, "I say unto thee."

**Of water and of the Spirit.**—We are here on the borderland of a great controversy. The subject is enter into the kingdom of God. (6) That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (7) Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.[1] (8) The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth:

[1] Or, *from above.*

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closely connected with that of the discourse in Capernaum (chap. vi.), and so far as it is a subject for the pages of a Commentary at all, it will be better to treat of it in connection with that discourse. (See *Excursus C: The Sacramental Teaching of St. John's Gospel.*) Our task here is to ask what meaning the words were intended by the Speaker to convey to the hearer; and this seems not to admit of doubt. The baptism of proselytes was already present to the thought; the baptism of John had excited the attention of all Jerusalem, and the Sanhedrin had officially inquired into it. Jesus Himself had submitted to it, but "the Pharisees and lawyers" [Nicodemus was both] "rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptised of him" (Luke vii. 29). The key to the present verse is found in the declaration of John, "I baptise with water . . . He baptiseth with the Holy Ghost" (chap. i. 26, 33), and this key must have been then in the mind of Nicodemus. The message was, baptism with water; baptism with water, by which the Gentile had been admitted as a new-born babe to Judaism, the rite representing the cleansing of the life from heathen pollutions, and devotion to the service of the true God; baptism with water, which John had preached in his ministry of reformation (comp. Matt. iii. 7), declaring a like cleansing as needed for Jew and Gentile, Pharisee and publican, as the gate to the kingdom of heaven, which was at hand; baptism with water, which demanded a public profession in the presence of witnesses, and an open loyalty to the new kingdom, not a visit by night, under the secrecy of darkness—this is the message of God to the teacher seeking admission to His kingdom. This he would understand. It would now be clear to him why John came baptising, and why Jews were themselves baptised confessing their sins. There is no further explanation of the "outward and visible sign," but the teaching passes on to the "inward and spiritual grace," the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the birth of the Spirit, which was the work of the Messiah Himself. Of this, indeed, there were foreshadowings and promises in the Old Testament Scriptures (comp., *e.g.*, Ezek. xxxvi. 25 *et seq.*; Jer. xxxi. 33; Joel ii. 28); but the deeper meaning of such passages was buried beneath the ruins of the schools of prophets, and few among later teachers had penetrated to it. It is hard for this Rabbi to see it, even when it is brought home to him.

(6) **That which is born of the flesh is flesh.**—The first step is to remind him of the law of likeness in natural generation. "Flesh," as distinct from "spirit," is human nature in so far as it is common with animal nature, consisting of the bodily frame and its animal life, feelings, and passions. "Flesh," as opposed to "spirit," is this nature as not under the guidance of the human spirit, which is itself the shrine of the Divine Spirit, and therefore it is sinful. (Comp. Gal. v. 16 *et seq.*; vi. 8.) It is this nature in its material constitution, and subject to sin, which is transmitted from father to son. The physical life itself is dependent upon birth. That which is born of the flesh is flesh.

There is an analogous law of spiritual generation. Spirit as opposed to flesh is the differentia of man as distinct from all other creatures. It is the image of God in him, the seat of the capacity for the communion with God, which is the true principle of life. In the natural man this is crushed and dormant; in the spiritual man it has been quickened by the influence of the Holy Ghost. This is a new life in him, and the spiritual life, like the physical, is dependent upon birth. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

(7) **Ye must be born again.**—The laws of natural and spiritual generation have been stated as general truths, holding good for all mankind, "that which is born." But there is a special application to the present case, "Marvel not that I said unto thee (teacher as thou art) that ye (children of Abraham as ye are) must be born again." In so far as they were children of Abraham according to the flesh, they were children of Abraham's physical and sinful nature. The law of that, as of all human nature, was that flesh ruled animal life, and animal life ruled spirit, and the whole man became carnal, bringing forth the fruits of the flesh. The law of the regenerate nature was that the spirit, born by the influence of the Divine Spirit, rose to a new life of communion with God, controlled the lower life, with its affections, feelings, and desires, and that these thus controlled became the motive power of the body; the whole man thus became spiritual, bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit. (Comp. Note on 1 Thess. v. 23.) For them, then, as for all, it was no matter of wonder, it was an absolute necessity of their true life, that they should be born anew.

(8) **The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof.**—Better (see Note below), *the Spirit breatheth where He willeth, and thou hearest His voice.* These words are an explanation of the spiritual birth, the necessity of which has been asserted in the previous verses. They must have come to Nicodemus, bringing in their sound echoes of the old familiar words, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. ii. 7). These words would bring to the mind thoughts of the human body, cold, lifeless, corpse-like; of the breath of life passing into it; of the beating pulse, the opening eye, the action of nerve, muscle, and limb, as, in obedience to God's will, matter became the framework of spirit, and man became a living soul. There are parallel thoughts of the spirit existing in capacity for life and union with God, but crushed beneath the physical life with its imperative demands for support, and the sensible life with its engrossing pleasures and pains, and sorrows and joys; of the Spirit of God breathing upon it; and of the dormant power awakening into a new life of noblest thoughts and hopes and energies, when man is born of the Spirit.

And yet the new spiritual birth, like the physical, cannot be explained. We can observe the phenomena, we cannot trace the principle of life. He breatheth where He willeth, in the wide world of man, free as the wind of heaven, bound by no limits of country or of race. The voice is heard speaking to the man himself, and through him to others; there is the evidence of the new birth in the new life. We know not whence He comes, or whither He goes. We cannot fix the so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

(9) Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? (10) Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? (11) Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and

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day or hour of the new birth with certainty. We know not what its final issues will be. It is the beginning of a life which is a constant growth, and the highest development here is but the germ of that which shall be hereafter (1 John iii. 2).

**So is every one that is born of the Spirit.**—The sense is, *In this manner is every one* (*born*) *who is born of the Spirit.* The universality is again emphatically asserted. Individual spiritual life depends upon individual spiritual birth. The baptism of the Spirit is needed for all. Now, indeed, coming as a fire burning in men's hearts, consuming the chaff of sin, while He purifies and stores up all that is true and good; now coming as in a moment, and arresting a man in a course of evil, revealing the iniquity of sin, and giving the power to reform; now coming as the gradual dawning of day upon the youthful soul who has never been wholly without it; here in a sermon or a prayer, there in the lessons of childhood; now by the example of a noble life or the lessons of history; again in the study of Scripture or the truths written on the page of nature—the Spirit breatheth where it willeth. We may not limit His action, but by His action must every one be born again. Comp. the instances of what men call gradual conversion and sudden conversion, placed side by side in the same chapter, in Acts xvi. 14, 29 *et seq.*

The rendering of the first clause of this verse by the *Spirit breatheth* for "wind bloweth" of the Authorised version has met with so little support that it is right to state briefly the grounds on which it rests.

(1) The word πνεῦμα (*pneuma*) occurs some 370 times in the Greek New Testament, and of these, twenty-three times in this Gospel. It is nowhere rendered "wind" by our translators, except in this instance, and they have rendered the same word by "Spirit" in the same verse, and twice besides in the same context (verses 5, 6). There is another word for "wind" (ἄνεμος), which occurs thirty-one times in the New Testament, and which John himself uses in chap. vi. 18. It is not contended that πνεῦμα may not mean "wind," "the breath of wind," but that this is not its New Testament use, where the word is restricted to its special meaning. (It is plural in Heb. i. 7; see Note there.) It is admitted also that the Hebrew or Chaldee word which πνεῦμα here translates has the two senses, but the sense in which it is here used is fixed by the translator.

(2) The word for "bloweth," "breatheth," is of the same root as πνεῦμα. It is used in the New Testament with "wind," but naturally has the meaning of its cognate substantive. The Vulgate can exactly render it by "Spiritus ubi vult spirat," but we have in English no verb cognate with "Spirit."

(3) It is perfectly natural to ascribe the power of willing to the Spirit, but it is not consistent with the simplicity of our Lord's teaching thus to personify "wind," especially in teaching on a subject where the simplest words are hard to fathom. The common rendering makes *Him* use the same word, in the same verse, of the third person in the Trinity, and of a natural phenomenon.

(4) The proper meaning of the word rendered "sound" (φωνή) is articulate "voice." It is used in fifteen passages in this Gospel only, and everywhere translated "voice" except here. Let the reader substitute the one meaning for the other in any of these passages, *e.g.*, chaps. i. 23; iii. 29; v. 25, 28; x. 3, 4, 5, 16, and he will find that they are not interchangeable.

(5) It is believed that the rendering adopted agrees with the whole context, and gives a fuller sense to the words of the great Teacher.

(6) The sense suggested for the last clause, "In this manner is every one born who is of the Spirit," removes the necessity of finding something with which the work of the Spirit may be compared, and it is in this necessity that the received versions of the first clause really find their root.

These reasons are, it is thought, not an insufficient basis for the interpretation here adopted. It is adopted not without the knowledge that a consensus of authorities may be pleaded against it. For its details it may be that no authority can be pleaded, but the rendering of πνεῦμα here by "spirit" is not without the support of width of learning and depth of power, critical acumen and spiritual insight, for it rests on the names of Origen and Augustine, of Albrecht Bengel and Frederick Maurice.

(9) **How can these things be?**—The answer to the previous question has spoken of a spiritual birth and a spiritual life and a spiritual kingdom, but all this is in a region of which the Rabbinic schools knew nothing. They were the authorised exponents of Law and Prophets; they knew the precise number of words, and the shape of letters; the form of a phylactery, and the width of a fringe; the tithing of garden herbs, and the manner of washing the hands: but spirit, life, a man's soul born again!—"how can these things be?"

(10) **Art thou a master of Israel?**—Better, *Art thou the teacher of Israel?* The article is emphatic, and points to the position of Nicodemus as a teacher of repute—"the well-known teacher;" or possibly it is to be understood of the Sanhedrin as represented by him—"Is this the teaching of Israel?" There is something of just indignation here, as everywhere when the words of Jesus Christ are addressed to the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. "You who teach others, have you need to learn the very first lessons of true religion? You who claim to loose and bind men, and place heavy burdens on them which they cannot bear, are you without the simplest real knowledge of what God is, or of what man is? Do teachers of Israel know not these things when they lie beneath every page of the Old Testament Scriptures?"

(11) Once again the "Verily, verily" of deeper truth. "We speak that we do know" is in sharp contrast to their formal teaching of matters external to the truth. The plural is not usual in the language of Christ, and the immediate passage to the singular forbids us to accept the usual grammatical explanation that it is the plural of majesty. He apparently joins others with Himself,—those who have spoken and known and testified, and whose testimony has been rejected by the Jews. We have to think of him whose life-work was to bear witness of the Light (chap. i. 8), and of the band of disciples who form a little school round their Master, and who in Jerusalem, as in Galilee, testified of Him; and it may even be that in the house and presence of one of that

testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. (12) If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you *of* heavenly things? (13) And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven.

(14) And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,[a] even so must

[a] Num. 21. 9.

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band this conversation took place (comp. verse 2). They knew the power of the new life, and had been baptised of water and of spirit. In their measure and degree, as He in fulness, they spake what they knew, and testified what they had seen. (Comp. chap. xv. 27.)

**And ye receive not our witness**—*i.e.*, "ye Jews," the teachers, of whom Nicodemus was one, the representatives of His own who received Him not (chap. i. 11). This attitude of the mind which refused to accept the evidence of witnesses as to things they had known and seen was of the essence of unbelief, and made further revelation impossible. When the will closed the faculty of faith, it left open no access for fuller spiritual truth.

(12) **Earthly things**—*i.e.*, things upon earth, having the sphere of their action upon earth. These are not necessarily restricted to the subjects of this interview. The context includes previous witness borne by Him, and there must have been much which is unrecorded. (Comp. chap. ii. 23.) But the new birth is not excluded from "earthly things," because it is the entrance to a life which, while it is spiritual, is still a life upon earth.

**Heavenly things,** in the same way, are things which have the sphere of their action in heaven, the full development of the spiritual life, of which the birth only is on earth; the divine counsels of redemption; the Messianic mysteries, of which this ruler of Israel does not understand even the initiation. Comp. the question in the Wisdom of Solomon, "What man is he that can know the counsel of God? or who can think what the will of the Lord is? . . . And hardly do we guess aright at things that are upon earth, and with labour do we find the things that are before us: but the things that are in heaven who hath searched out?" (ix. 13, 16).

The earthly things are the elements of spiritual knowledge, having their test in the moral sense and in their fitness to supply the spiritual wants of man. When these elements are learnt, the mind is then, and then only, fitted to receive heavenly things. The teaching can only proceed step by step from the known to the unknown; but if the will refuses or the intellect neglects to know the knowable, the man cuts himself off from the power to receive truth. The message from the spirit-world has come, and others read it; but he has not learnt the alphabet. (Comp. Note on chap. xvi. 12.)

(13) **And no man hath ascended up.**—There can be no other means of receiving heavenly truth. No man hath learnt it, and is able to teach it, except the Son of Man, who ever was, and is, in heaven. The thought has met us before (chap. i. 18). To Nicodemus it must have come as an answer to the words of Agur, which had passed into a proverb to express the vanity of human effort to know God. "Who hath ascended up into heaven or descended? . . . . What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?" (Prov. xxx. 4). No man had so passed to heaven and returned again to earth; but there was One then speaking with him who had been in heaven with God, and could tell him its eternal truths. He had that knowledge which a man could obtain only by ascending to heaven, and He came down from heaven with it. From the human point of view He was as one who had already ascended and descended. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 51.) This is the evident meaning of the sentence, and the form is quite consistent with it. To explain the perfect tense of the future ascension, or to introduce the idea of the "hypostatic union," by virtue of which the human nature may be said to have ascended into heaven with the divine, is, to give an explanation, not of the text, but of a misunderstanding of it. (But comp. chap. vi. 62.)

**Which is in heaven.**—These words are omitted in some MSS., including the Sinaitic and the Vatican. The judgment of most modern editors (not including Westcott and Hort) retains them. It is an instance where it is hard to account for the insertion by a copyist, but where the omission is not unlikely, owing to their seeming difficulty. And yet the difficulty is one which vanishes before the true idea of heaven. If heaven is thought of as a place infinitely distant beyond clouds and sky, or as a time in the far future when this world's life shall end, then it is indeed hard to understand what is here meant by "the Son of Man which is in heaven;" and a copyist may well have found in omission the easiest solution of the difficulty. But if heaven is something wholly different from this coldness of distance in space or time; if it is a state, a life, in which we are, which is in us—now in part, hereafter in its fulness—then may we understand and with glad hearts hold to the vital truth that the Son of Man, who came down from heaven, was ever in heaven; and that every son of man who is born of water and of the Spirit is "made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor (in the present, κληρονόμος) of the kingdom of heaven."

(14) **And as Moses lifted up.**—This verse is closely connected by the conjunction "and" with what has gone before. Jesus has taught that in Himself heaven and earth meet; so that, while subject to the conditions of human life, He, the Son of Man, the representative of humanity, is in heaven. He goes on to show that what is true of the representative is, through Him, true of the whole race. Again the Old Testament Scriptures form the basis of the teaching to their expounder. The people in the wilderness bitten by the fiery serpents, the poison-virus spreading through their veins, and causing burning pain, torpor, and death—this was symbolical of the world lying in the misery, restlessness, and spiritual death, which came from the Serpent's victory in Paradise. The serpent of brass lifted up by Moses, in which the sufferer saw the means of recovery determined by God, and was healed by faith in Him—this was symbolical of the means of salvation determined by God for the world. (Comp. the phrase "lifted up" in chaps. viii. 28; xii. 32; and, as an exact parallel with this passage, chap. xii. 34.) Nicodemus must have understood that the healing power of the serpent of brass was in the fact that it led men to trust in Jehovah, who had appointed it. This was the current Jewish interpretation. Comp. the Jerusalem Targum, "Their faces were to be fixed on their Father who is in

the Son of man be lifted up: (15) that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

(16) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,[a] that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (17) For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world;[b] but that the world through him might be saved.

(18) He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only be-

[a] 1 John 4. 9.

[b] ch. 12. 47.

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heaven;" so the Targum of Jonathan ben-Uziel, "The heart was fixed on the name of the word of Jehovah;" so, again, the Wisdom of Solomon, "For he that turned himself toward it was not saved by the thing that he saw, but by Thee, that art the Saviour of all" (xvi. 7; see the whole passage, xvi. 6—13). It was the sign of the Eternal in power and in love present to save, and the man who realised that presence lived with a new life. In the divine counsels it was willed, and must be, that the Son of Man should be the witness to the world of the Eternal Power and Love which saves every man who grasps it.

(15) **Not perish, but . . .**—These words have been added here from the following verse. Omitting them, the sentence should be rendered, *that every one who believeth may have in Him eternal life.* This construction is borne out by a comparison of chaps. v. 39; xvi. 33; xx. 31. "To believe in Him" is not used by St. John. (See Note on chap. i. 12.) The thought of this verse is that as every Israelite, believing in God, had in the brazen serpent a message from God; so every man who believes in God ever has this message from God in the crucified Son of Man. The object of faith is not here expressed. The words speak only of the man who believeth, whose heart is open to spiritual truth. That man has, in Jesus Christ and Him crucified, a truth which goes to his inmost spirit, sending a new life through his whole being. To the non-believer this may be but the self-sacrifice of heroism. To the believer it is Light breaking upon the darkness of his soul; it is Life bursting the cold sepulchre of a deadened spirit; it is Love winning its way through the scales of a hardened heart; it is Mercy deeper and wider even than his sin; it is Hope bracing the man to a new life of holiness; it is the Word of *God,* and in Him he has eternal life. The reader will not forget that the lifting up the serpent of brass followed the confession of the people. "We have sinned . . . pray unto the Lord that He take away the serpents from us" (Num. xxi. 7).

(16) The last verse has spoken of "every one who believeth." The thought went beyond the limits that Rabbis set to the kingdom of God. Its only limit is humanity. This thought is now repeated and strengthened by the "might not perish," and the love of God is made the foundation on which it rests. Perhaps no verse in the Bible has been so much explained as this; perhaps no verse can be so little explained. Most young preachers have sermons upon it; older men learn that its meaning must be felt and thought rather than spoken. Still less can it be written; and this Note may not attempt to do more than indicate some lines of thought which may help to lead to others.

**God so loved the world.**—Familiar as the words are to us, they were uttered to Nicodemus for the first time. They are the revelation of the nature of God, and the ground of our love to God and man. (Comp. Notes on 1 John iv. 7—11.)

**His only begotten Son.**—Here, once again, the Old Testament Scriptures suggest and explain the words used. Every Jew knew, and loved to think and tell of his forefather who was willing to sacrifice his own and only son in obedience to what he thought to be the will of God (Gen. xxii.). But Love gives, and does not require, sacrifice. God wills not that Abraham should give his son, but He gave His only begotten Son. The dread power that man has ever conceived—that is not God; the pursuing vengeance that sin has ever imagined—that is not God; the unsatisfied anger that sacrifice has ever suggested—that is not God. But all that human thought has ever gathered of tenderness, forgiveness, love, in the relation of father to only child—all this is, in the faintness of an earth-drawn picture, an approach to the true idea of God. Yes, the true idea is infinitely beyond all this; for the love for the world gives in sacrifice the love for the only begotten Son.

**Believeth in.**—Better, *believeth upon.* The preposition is not the same as in the last verse. (Comp. chap. i. 12.) There the thought was of the Son of Man lifted up, in whom every one who believes and can interpret spiritual truth, ever has eternal life. Here the thought is of the Son of God given for the world, and every one who believes upon, casts his whole being upon Him, and, like Abraham, in will rests all upon God, finds that God has provided Himself a lamb for a burnt-offering instead of human sacrifice or death.

**Everlasting life.**—Better, as the same Greek word is rendered in the previous verse, *eternal life.* For the meaning of this word see Note on Matt. xxv. 46. It is of frequent use in this Gospel (seventeen times), and always used in reference to life.

(17) **To condemn the world** gives to the English reader a stronger impression than that of the original Greek. The word (*κρίνω, krino,* the Latin *c*(*k*)*erno,* and the English dis-*cern*) means originally to separate, and in the moral sense to separate good from evil. Passing from the act to the effect, it may mean to absolve; but as the usual effect of separation is to exclude the evil, the word has attached to itself more frequently the idea of condemnation. Our word *judge,* which has itself something of this double meaning, is probably the best rendering in this context.

Part of the current belief about the Messiah's advent was, that he would destroy the Gentile world. The authorised expositions of many texts of the Old Testament asserted this, and Nicodemus must ofttimes have heard it and taught it. God's love for, and gift to, the world has just been declared. This truth runs counter to their belief, and is now stated as an express denial of it. The purpose of the Messiah's mission is not to judge, but to save. The latter clause of the verse changes the order of the thought. It would naturally be "but that He might save the world." The inversion makes prominent the action of man in willing to be saved.

(18) **He that believeth on him is not condemned.**—Again, *judged* is better than "condemned." There is, moreover, an important change of tense in this verse, which the Authorised version does not mark

gotten Son of God. (19) And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world,[a] and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. (20) For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.[1] (21) But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

[1] Or, *discovered.*

[a] ch. 1. 4.

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clearly. *He that believeth on Him, is not judged: but he that believeth not hath been (and is) already judged.*

**Because he hath not believed.**—The human spirit fulfils the end of its being, and finds its highest good, in communion with God. It cannot, then, fail to recognise and believe in a revelation of God. This revelation has been made in the only way in which it can be fully made (comp. chap. i. 18), in the person of the only begotten Son. The very fact that He is rejected is the judgment of the spirit which rejects. It has lost by neglect its power to perceive, or by will it hides itself from God. "I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself" (Gen. iii. 10).

(19) **And this is the condemnation.**—For "condemnation" read *judgment;* for "light" and "darkness," *the light* and *the darkness.* The object is salvation, not judgment (verse 17); but the separation of the good involves the judgment of the evil. The light makes the darkness visible. Both were before men. That they chose darkness was the act of their own will, and this act of the will was determined by the evil of their deeds. "The light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." (Comp. Note on chap. i. 5.)

The words are general, but they must have had, for him who then heard them, a special force. It was night. He had avoided the light of day, and like men who go forth to deeds of darkness under cover of darkness, he had come in secrecy to Jesus. His own conscience told him that he was in the presence of a Teacher sent from God (verse 2); but he has checked the voice of conscience. He has shrunk from coming to this Teacher in the light of day, and has loved the darkness of the night.

(20) **For every one that doeth evil hateth the light.**—In this and the next verse we have the explanation of the choice of the darkness and rejection of the light. The fact itself is first stated more strongly. Not only does the man that doeth evil love darkness rather than light, but he hates the light. (Comp. Note on chap. vii. 7.) Its presence makes manifest and reproves his works, which he would hide even from himself. It illumines the dark and secret chambers of the heart, and reveals thoughts and deeds which conscience, seeing in this light, trembles at, and turns away to darkness that it may hide itself from its own gaze.

It has been often noted that the word "doeth," in this and the following verse, represent different words in the original. Perhaps we may distinguish them in English by rendering this verse: "Every one that *practiseth* evil." It is not less important to note that the word for evil here differs from the word so rendered in the last clause of the previous verse. Strictly, and the change of word seems to demand a strict interpretation (comp. Note on chap. v. 29), it is not that which is positively, but that which is negatively, evil—that which is trivial, poor, worthless. The man who practiseth such things misses the aim of life, and turns from the light that would point it out to him. He does many things, but forgets that one thing is needful, and spends a life-time in trifles without any permanent result. We are familiar with the thought that immorality shuns the light and warps the will, and thus darkens knowledge and weakens faith; but we remember too seldom the deadening effect of an unreal and aimless existence which is not truly a life.

**Should be reproved.**—The margin will show that our translators felt a difficulty about this word (see Notes on Matt. xviii. 15), where it is rendered "tell him his fault," and comp. the other instances in this Gospel, chap. viii. 9, 45 ("convince" in both), and especially chap. xvi. 8 ("reprove," and margin "convince"). The moral idea is exactly illustrated by the action of light, which makes manifest the wrong, and leads the conscience to see it and repent of it. It is through this chastening that the man passes from darkness to light. It is because men shrink from this chastening that they hate the light. (Comp. Notes on the remarkable parallel in Eph. v. 11 *et seq.*)

(21) **He that doeth truth** is opposed to "him that practiseth evil." With fixed purpose he doeth not that which is evil or worthless, but that which, when every veil by which it is hidden from himself or others is removed, remains morally true. Regarding truth as the work of life, he cometh to the light, and though for him too it will be a revelation of sins and errors, and deeds of shame, he hates them the moment he knows them, cuts them from his life at whatever cost, and carries his whole being to the light that it may become really true, and that its true works may be made manifest. He will hate the darkness, for he can have nothing to conceal in it. He will love the light, for everything which it reproves he reproves too, and every ray he can gather from it becomes part of the truth which is his life-work. For the remarkable expression "to do the truth," which, with its opposite "to do a lie" (chap. viii. 44; Rev. xxi. 27; xxii. 15), is common in Rabbinic writers, comp. Job xiii. 6, and 1 John i. 6; and for "walking in truth," comp. 2 John 4, and 3 John 3, 4. In 1 Cor. xiii. 6, "truth" is opposed to "iniquity."

**That they are wrought in God.**—Perhaps better, *because they are wrought in God.* This is the reason of their being made manifest in the light revealed in the person of Christ. However full the light which had guided men's steps had been, it was still part of the true Light which lighteth every man, and must lead to Him. Every work wrought in God had already bound them in union with Him, and prepared them to receive Him. That Light was in the world, in the Law and Prophets of the Old Testament Scriptures (Matt. v. 17), in the witness of things invisible ever borne by the things that are made (Rom. i. 20), in the law written upon the hearts of men (Rom. ii. 14, 15). As before (verse 19), these words are general, but we may not exclude from them a special meaning. He who spoke them warrants our applying them to characters, like the true Nathanael, in whom there is no guile (chap. i. 47); like the rockman Peter (chap. i. 42); like the witness John (Matt. xi. 11). Some ground was good when the Sower went forth to sow.

Two thoughts are suggested to us at the close of this first discourse. One is, that the writer, with perfect naturalness, says nothing of the effect on Nicodemus, but leaves the after-glimpses to tell their own tale.

(22) After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judæa; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.[a]

(23) And John also was baptizing in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized. (24) For John was not yet cast into prison.

(25) Then there arose a question between *some* of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. (26) And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness,[b] behold, the same baptizeth, and all *men* come to him.

(27) John answered and said, A man can receive[1] nothing,[c] except it be given him from heaven. (28) Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ,[d] but that I am sent before him. (29) He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the

[b] ch. 1. 7, 34.

[a] ch. 4. 2.

[1] Or, *take unto himself.*

[c] Heb. 5. 4.

[d] ch. 1. 20.

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(See chaps. vii. 50; xix. 39.) The other is, that we have come upon teaching distinct in style and matter from that of the earlier Gospels. On this see *Excursus D: The Discourses in St. John's Gospel.*

(22) **After these things.**—Not implying that He left Jerusalem at once. The "land of Judæa" is the province as distinct from the capital. This verse points to a work in Judæa of which we know nothing more. It was probably not confined to one place. We have to think of Christ as continuing His teaching, of large numbers influenced by it (verse 26), and of these as being baptised by the disciples (chap. iv. 2). His converts were the country people, and it is the action of the Pharisees which caused Him to retire to Samaria.

(23) **Ænon near to Salim.**—The latter place was clearly well known at the time, and regarded as fixing the locality of the former. It has been usual to follow Jerome and Eusebius, who fix the place in the valley of the Jordan, eight miles south from Bethshan, or Scythopolis. (See quotation from the *Onomasticon*, in Caspari, *Chron. and Geogr. Introd.*, Eng. Trans., p. 122.) The objection to this is, that the text seems to limit us to Judæa (comp. chap. iv. 3, 4), whereas this Salim is more than thirty miles from it. The word Ænon means "springs," and probably belonged to more than one place where "there was much water." The mention of this is opposed to the locality of the Jordan valley, where it would not be necessary to choose a place for this reason. Dr. Barclay (*City of the Great King*, 1858, pp. 558—570) found both names in a place answering the description, and certainly answering the narrative better than other identifications, at *Wady Farah*, about five miles from Jerusalem.

**They came**—*i.e.*, the people.

(24) **Was not yet cast into prison.**—This Judæan ministry, then, preceded the Galilean ministry of the earlier Gospels. (See chap. iv. 3, and Note on Matt. iv. 12.)

(25) **Then there arose a question.**—For "the Jews," the reading of the better MSS. is, *a Jew.* The question arose on the side of John's disciples. What the exact nature of it was we do not know, and have no means of judging. It was one of the questions which in every age has arisen about external rites, and has too often been accompanied by a neglect of inner principles. This arose in some way from the fact of the disciples of Jesus baptising near to the place where John was baptising, and doubtless was closely connected with these baptisms. The fact is only preserved as an incidental introduction to the remarkable testimony of the Baptist which follows.

(26) **Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan.**—John's disciples, with a natural attachment to their master, and without the knowledge of what that master's work really was, are jealous of what seems to them the rival work of Jesus. He had been with John; the Baptist had borne witness to Him. Now He seems to usurp his work, and the throngs which had crowded to the Forerunner go to Him. (Comp. Notes on chaps. i. 8; iv. 2.)

**Barest witness.**—Better, *hast borne witness.*

(27) **A man can receive nothing . . .**—Do these words apply to the Baptist himself, or to Christ? Do they mean "I cannot assume this higher position which you wish to give me, because it is not given me by heaven;" or, "His work, with its influence over men, ought to convince you that His mission is divine"? Expositors have given, now this, now that answer. The immediate connection with verse 26 points to the latter view as the correct one (but see *Alford's* Note on the other side). The power that had shown itself in word and work, teaching as none ever taught before, binding men—aye, some of their own brotherhood—to Himself, convincing men whose minds were open to the truth that He was the very Christ—all this could only have been received from heaven. Did they feel the movement around them? Let them recognise it as divine, and seek to be borne with it. (See Note on chap. vi. 36.)

(28) **Ye yourselves bear me witness.**—They remembered (verse 26) that John had borne witness to Jesus. Did they not remember too what he had said? He had from the first known his own work, and the greater work. Some of his disciples had known it also, and had gone from him to Jesus. This which they see was the necessary result of the truth he had ever declared.

(29) **He that hath the bride is the bridegroom.**—This is the only instance in this Gospel where the familiar imagery of an Eastern marriage meets us. (See Note on Matt. ix. 15, where we have the same imagery in the answer of our Lord to these same disciples of John, then taking sides with the Pharisees, on the question of fasting.) The "friend of the bridegroom"—called by the Hebrews "Shōshbēn," and by the Greeks "Paranymph"—was charged with the preliminaries of the marriage. He arranged the contract, acted for the bridegroom during the betrothal, and arranged for, and presided at, the festivities of the wedding-day itself. It was a position of honour, in proportion to the position of the bridegroom himself, and was given to his chief friend. That friend then joyed in his joy, and there was none brighter on that day than he. This in John's thought is an illustration of his own position. The bridegroom is the Messiah; the bride is the Kingdom of God—the church, consisting of all who with pure hearts are willing to receive Him; the friend who has arranged the betrothal, who has

bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. (30) He must increase, but I *must* decrease. (31) He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all. (32) And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony. (33) He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.[a] (34) For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure

[a] Rom. 3. 4.

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prepared these hearts, is John himself. He now stands and hears the Bridegroom. Some of those who had been prepared by him for the Bridegroom would have come, it may be, and told him of his words. He is now near at hand. Throngs crowd to Him. The bride is approaching. Do they see in all this matter for envy? It is to him the consummation of all hopes. The life-work has not been in vain. The cup runs over. The joy is fulfilled.

(30) **He must increase, but I must decrease.**—The office of the paranymph ceases to exist when the marriage is accomplished. It must be so. So too in the interpretation. His own work was well-nigh done, but he is filled with the joy of having done his work, not with disappointment that it pales before the brightness of the work which is to follow. This is the text of the Forerunner's life. Well will it be for those followers of Christ whose lives shall be sermons on it!

(31) **He that cometh from above.**—Comp. Note on verse 13, and chap. viii. 23. It is expressed in another form in the last clause of the verse.

**Is above all**—*i.e.*, above all persons, and, as the context limits the sense, specially above all teachers.

**He that is of the earth is earthly.**—This is the right sense, but the force of the words is lessened by not preserving the three-fold "of the earth" which is in the Greek. "He who is of the earth, of the earth he is, and of the earth he speaketh." The first marks out the Baptist's origin, as opposed to Him that cometh from above; the second asserts that the nature is, in accord with this origin, human and limited in faculty, as opposed to that of Him who is above all; the third declares that his teaching is from the standpoint of human nature and limited faculty, embracing indeed divine subjects and receiving divine revelation (chap. i. 33), but having this treasure in earthen vessels, imperfectly realising it, and imperfectly teaching it (verse 33). Then the contrast carries him away from this thought of self, in all its weakness, to dwell on the fulness of the teaching of the perfect Teacher, and he emphatically repeats, with the change of words suggested by "of the earth," what he has before said of it, "He that cometh from heaven is above all."

This repetition is the answer to the jealousy of his disciples, who wished to place him in a position of rivalry with Jesus. It is the answer to all self-assertion on the part of human teachers.

(32) **And what he hath seen and heard.**—This is the opposite of the third point, the speaking of the earth in the last verse. Divine in origin, divine in nature, He is divine in teaching. That teaching, too, is a witness of things seen and heard. (Comp. Notes on chap. vi. 11, 12.) It was a message from the Father's home, brought by the Son Himself. His own message was but that of a servant who did not fully know its meaning.

**No man receiveth his testimony.**—These words are shown by those which immediately follow to go in their pathos beyond the strict limit of the facts present to his own mind. Yet he may well have said "no man." Of the crowds that thronged to his own baptism, of those who were then thronging to the baptism of Jesus, how many were there who were receiving like testimony of the things seen and heard? (Comp. again verse 11.) How great the first promise, how bitter the last disappointment, of the Baptist's life! These words of intense feeling are not to be measured by the cold standard of a formal exactness. And still it may be that the sadness of his tone arises from the fact that of those to whom he speaks, and at the time when he speaks, there was literally no one receiving this testimony, but all were seeking to make the earthly teacher a rival of the divine. The tense is present; those in the next verse are past.

(33) **He that hath received.**—Better, *he that received.* "Hath set to his seal," better, *set his seal.* It had been so. Earlier disciples, as Andrew and John (chap. i. 40), had passed from the Forerunner to the Great Teacher, and had heard in His words that which went to the divine in their own spirits, and had come from the short first meeting with the conviction, "We have found the Messias." They received the witness, and, as they heard it, they too became witnesses. Just as a man sets his private seal—here, probably, the common Eastern stamp that affixed the name is thought of—and by it attests the truth of a document, so they attested, in the power which that witness had over their lives, their recognition of it as truth. It has always been so. The moral fitness of Christianity to meet the spiritual needs of men, and its moral power over the lives of men in all the varying circumstances of culture, race, and creed, has raised up in every age an holy army of witnesses, who have set their seal to its divine truth. (Comp. for the thought of sealing, chap. vi. 27; Rom. iv. 11; xv. 28; 1 Cor. ix. 2; &c.)

(34) **For he whom God hath sent.**—Better, *he whom God sent.* The acceptance of the witness of things seen and heard is the attestation by the human spirit of the truthfulness of God, for Jesus is as one sent from God to declare Him. It is the divine image in man which recognises divinity. Every human faculty finds its true work, and true satisfaction, and the true object of its being, in Him; and therefore the whole man knows that His words are true, and recognises that He speaks the words of God. (Comp. 1 John v. 10.)

**For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.**—The italics will show that the words "unto Him" are added in our version; and it is probable that the word "God," which has been repeated from the first clause of the verse, should be also omitted here. We have then to read, "For He giveth not the Spirit by measure;" or, possibly, "For the Spirit giveth not by measure." If, however, we remember that John the Baptist is the speaker, and that he had seen "the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and coming upon Him" (see Note on Matt. iii. 16, and comp. such passages as Luke xi. 13, and in this Gospel chaps. xiv. 16, and xv. 26), we shall still interpret the words *unto him.* (35) The Father loveth the Son,[a] and hath given all things into his hand. (36) He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life:[b] and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

A.D. 30.

[a] Matt. 11. 27.

[b] Hab. 2. 4; 1 John 5. 10.

CHAPTER IV.—(1) When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (2) (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) (3) he left Judæa, and departed again into Galilee. (4) And he must

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in the sense which our version gives. The words "by measure," in the sense of limitation, are frequent in the classical and rabbinical writings. The Rabbis seem to have applied the phrase to prophets and teachers, saying that the Spirit dwelt in the prophets only in a certain measure. Comp. 2 Kings ii. 9, where Elisha prays for "a double portion," or, more exactly, *a portion of two*—the portion of the first-born son (Deut. xxi. 17)—of the spirit of Elijah. The same thought meets us in St. Paul (himself a pupil of Gamaliel), who speaks of "the self-same Spirit dividing to every man severally as He will" (see 1 Cor. xii. 4—12). The opposite of this thought, then, is before us here. God gives in this case not as in others. The Son who cometh from above is above all. There is no gift of prophet, or of teacher, which is not given to Him. He has the fulness of the spiritual gifts which in part are given to men, and He speaks the very words of God. It will be noted that John is still expounding to his disciples the meaning of his own declaration, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

(35) **The Father loveth the Son.**—Comp. Note on Matt. xi. 27, which is remarkable as an instance of what we call distinctly Johannine thought and diction in the earlier Gospels. We shall meet the words again in chap. v. 20.

(36) Here too we have, in the words of John, thoughts which we have found already (verses 15, 16), and shall find again (chap. v. 24), in the words of Christ Himself.

**He that believeth not the Son.**—Better, *he that obeyeth not the Son.* The word, which occurs only here in the Gospels, is not the same as that at the beginning of the verse, and shows that the faith there intended is the subjection of the will to the Son, to whom the Father hath given all things (verse 35). (Comp. "obedience to the faith," Rom. i. 5.)

**Shall not see life** is contrasted with the present possession of the believer. He has life; the man who disobeys has not, and while he disobeys shall not see life, for he cannot be a subject of a kingdom to whose laws he refuses allegiance. But there is also a fearful positive contrast. There is for him a present possession, which shall also remain.

**The wrath of God abideth on him.**—Once only in the four Gospels does this term, so full of tremendous meaning, meet us, and that in the Gospel of fullest love, and in a context which speaks of the Father's love to the Son, and of eternal life, which is the portion of all who believe on the Son. It must be so. This wrath (comp. Rom. ii. 8; Eph. iv. 31; Col. iii. 8; Rev. xix. 15) is not the fierceness of passion, nor is it the expression of fixed hatred. It is the necessary aspect of love and holiness toward those who reject love, and wilfully sin. It is not here spoken of as coming upon them, or as passing from them. It abideth, ever has and ever must; for the wrath of love must abide on hatred, the wrath of holiness must abide on sin. But none need hate, and none need live in wilful sin. "He that believeth"—how vast the love and bright the hope of the all-including words—"hath eternal life"! (Comp. Note on chap. vi. 56.)

## IV.

[(3) JESUS MANIFESTS HIMSELF PUBLICLY (*continued*):

(*d*) *In Samaria* (chap. iv. 1—42). *The woman of Samaria, and the living water* (verses 1—16). *The people of Samaria, and the fields white unto harvest* (verses 17—42);

(*e*) *In Galilee* (chap. iv. 43—54). *Received by the people. The courtier's faith.*]

(1) **When therefore the Lord knew.**—The second clause of this verse is given in the exact words of the report which came to the Pharisees: *When therefore the Lord knew that the Pharisees heard, "Jesus maketh and baptizeth more disciples than John."*

The report which reached John (chap. iii. 26) had come to them also, and the inference from His retirement is that it had excited their hostility. The hour to meet this has not yet come, and He withdraws to make, in a wider circle, the announcement which He has made in the Temple, in Jerusalem, in Judæa, and is about to make in Samaria and in Galilee.

(2) **Though Jesus himself baptized not.**—This is a correction, not of the writer's statement, but of the report carried to the Pharisees. The form of the report is quite natural. John did personally baptise, and when multitudes thronged him, it is probable that his disciples assisted. Greater numbers still (chap. iii. 26) were thronging to the baptism administered ministerially by the disciples of Jesus. (Comp. Acts x. 48; xix. 5; 1 Cor. i. 15—17.) They had been drawn to Him by His teaching and miracles in Jerusalem and the country round about, and they spoke of receiving His baptism. But the writer cannot let the report appear in his Gospel without correction. There was a reason which they did not know for the fact that Jesus did not baptise with water, for it was He "which baptiseth with the Holy Spirit" (chap. i. 33), and this power His disciples had not yet received (chap. vii. 39).

(3) **Again.**—This word is almost certainly part of the original text, though it is not found in some MSS. Its omission is due to a difficulty of interpretation. What is the previous return into Galilee? The only one mentioned in this Gospel is that of chap. i. 43. We have had another note of time in chap. iii. 24, from which we learn that this Judæan period of the ministry preceded the imprisonment of John, and therefore the commencement of the Galilean ministry recorded in Matt. iv. 12 (see Note there) and Mark i. 14. This second return, then, is the starting-point of the history of our Lord's work in Galilee as told by the earlier Gospels.

(4) **He must needs go through Samaria**—*i.e.,* following the shortest and most usual road, and the one we find Him taking from Galilee to Jerusalem (Luke ix. 52; see Note there). Josephus spoke of this as the customary way of the Galileans going up during the feasts at Jerusalem (*Ant.* xx. 6, § 1). The Pharisees, indeed, took the longer road through Peræa, to avoid

needs go through Samaria. (5) Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.[a] (6) Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with *his*

[a] Gen. 33. 19, & 48. 22; Josh. 24. 32.

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contact with the country and people of Samaria, but it is within the purpose of His life and work ("needs go," *i.e., was necessary that He should go*) to teach in Samaria, as in Judæa, the principles of true religion and worship, which would cut away the foundations of all local jealousies and feuds, and establish for all nations the spiritual service of the universal Father (verses 21—24).

(5) The "Samaria" of this chapter is the province into which the older kingdom had degenerated, and which took its name from the capital city. This was the Shomĕron built by Omri, on a hill purchased from Shemer (1 Kings xvi. 23, 24). The city was given by Augustus to Herod the Great, who rebuilt it, and called it after the Emperor, Sebaste, a name which survives in the modern village *Sebustiêh.*

**Sychar** involves questions of greater uncertainty. The reading may be regarded as beyond doubt, the attempts to substitute "Sychem," or "Sichem," being obviously made to avoid the topographical difficulty. The older geographers, followed by many modern commentators, suppose the word to be an intentional variation of the word Sychem, by which the Jews expressed their contempt for the city of the Samaritans, the sound being very nearly that of the Hebrew words for "lie" and "drunken." Others suppose the change of termination is a natural dialectic variation. (Comp. *Ben,* the Hebrew for son, as in *Ben*jamin, Gen. xxxv. 18, which in the later language became *Bar,* as in Simon *Bar*-jona, Matt. xvi. 17.) These explanations assume that Sychar is the same place as Shechem; but it is very improbable that St. John would have spoken of a city so well known as Shechem with the prefix "which is called," or would have thought it necessary to define it as "near to the parcel of ground . . . ." The only other places with the same prefix are Ephraim (chap. xi. 54), the Pavement (chap. xix. 13), and Golgotha (chap. xix. 17), but in the latter instances, as in the mention of Thomas called Didymus (chaps. xi. 16, xx. 24), the words do not imply a soubriquet (comp. Farrar, *Life of Christ,* i. 206, note, and Grove in Smith's *Dictionary of Bible,* "Sychar"), but are a citation of the names in Hebrew and Greek, for the benefit of Greek readers. To assert that Sychar is meant to convey a double meaning is to imply that this would be understood by readers for whom it is necessary to translate Gabbatha and Golgotha, Thomas and Cephas (chap. i. 42), for whom Messias has been rendered in Greek in chap. i. 41, and is to be again in this very discourse (verse 25). Shechem, moreover, was then known by the Greek name Neapolis, which has become the present *Naplûs* (see Ewald *in loc.,* and comp. Jos. *Wars,* iv.), and this name would have been as natural in this Gospel as, *e.g.,* Tiberias, which is found in it only (chaps. vi. 1, 23, and xxi. 1). Nor can it be said that Shechem was near to Jacob's well, for admitting that the old city extended considerably "farther eastward than at present," it must still have been more than a mile distant.

As early as the fourth century, Sychar was distinguished from Shechem by Eusebius, Jerome, and the Bordeaux Pilgrim, and the name also occurs in the Talmud. (See quotations in Wieseler's *Synopsis,* p. 231 of the Eng. Trans.) It is still found in the modern village *Askar,* about half a mile north from Jacob's well. A plan and description of the neighbourhood, by Dr. Rosen, Prussian Consul at Jerusalem, appeared in the *Journal of the German Oriental Society* (xiv. 634), and the results of this are now accessible to the English reader in the translation of Caspari's *Introduction* (p. 124). (Comp. Dr. Thomson's *The Land and the Book,* chap. xxxi.) The identification is accepted by Ewald, Godet, and Luthardt, among modern writers. Mr. Grove (Art. "Sychar," as above), inclines to it, but, as he says, "there is an etymological difficulty . . . 'Askar begins with the letter 'Ain, which Sychar does not appear to have contained; a letter too stubborn and enduring to be easily either dropped or assumed in a name." One is tempted to think it possible that this 'Ain is the first letter of the word for Spring or Fountain, the plural of which occurs in Ænon, in chap. iii. 23, and that *'A-Sychar* (well of Sychar) = *'Askar.*

**The parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.**—The reference is to the blessing of Joseph in Gen. xlviii. 22, which is translated by Kalisch, "And I give to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I take out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow." The patriarch is confident that he will, in his posterity, drive out the Amorite and possess the land promised him by God (verses 4 and 21). In that land there is a portion where Abraham had raised his first altar, and received the first promise that his seed should possess that land (Gen. xii. 6, 7). That portion had been his own first halting-place on his return from Padan-aram; and he, too, had erected an altar there, in a parcel of a field where his tent rested, which he bought for a hundred pieces of money, and made it sacred to El, the God of Israel (Gen. xxxiii. 18—20). It comes to his mind now, when in the last days of his life he looks on to the future and back to the past, and he gives it to his own and Rachel's son. The Hebrew word here used for portion is "Shechem" (Sh$^{e}$khem), and this, as the proper names in the following chapter, has, and is meant to have, a double meaning. The Greek of the LXX. could not preserve this play upon the words, and rendered it by the proper name *Sikima,* understanding that the portion referred to was that at Shechem. This the children of Israel understood too, for they gave this region to Ephraim (Josh. xvi.), and the parcel of ground became the resting-place for the bones of Joseph (Josh. xxiv. 32, 33).

(6) **Jacob's well** is one of the few spots about the position of which all travellers are agreed. Jesus, passing from south to west would pass up the valley of *Mochna* until the road turns sharp to the west, to enter the valley of Sichem between Ebal and Gerizim. Here is Jacob's field, and in the field is Jacob's well. It is dug in the rock, and is about 9 feet in diameter. The older travellers described it as more than 100 feet deep, and with several feet of water. Modern travellers have generally found it dry. Wilson describes it, in 1843, as only 75 feet deep.

**Sat thus on the well.**—Better, *was sitting thus at the well.* The words are one of the instances of exact knowledge which meet us in this Gospel. The tense is the descriptive imperfect. He was thus sitting when the woman came. He thus recalls the picture as it was impressed and remained fixed in the writer's mind. He saw Him, wearied by the noontide journey, sitting thus by the well, while they went on to the city to procure food. The reality of this fatigue, as one of the journey, sat thus on the well: *and* it was about the sixth hour. (7) There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (8) (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) (9) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. (10) Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. (11) The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living

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instances witnessing to the reality of His human nature, is important.

**About the sixth hour**—*i.e.*, as elsewhere in St. John, following the ordinary mode of counting, about 12 o'clock. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 39.) It is contended, on the other hand, that this was not the usual time for women to resort to the wells to draw water, but the narrative perhaps implies an unusual hour, as it speaks of only one woman there.

(7) **Of Samaria**—*i.e.*, of the country (verse 1), not of the city, which was nine miles farther north. She was of the people inhabiting the valley between Ebal and Gerizim, not, like Himself, a chance passenger by the well. The contrast is at once drawn between Him, a Jew and a man, and her, of Samaria and a woman.

**Give me to drink** is the almost always asked and almost never refused favour as the traveller meets the native by the well-side. He was wearied by the heat of the journey, and seeks the ordinary refreshment.

(8) **For** introduces His reason for asking this favour of her. The disciples had gone on. He was alone, and without the means of getting water for Himself (verse 11).

**Meat.**—Better, *food*, as the former word is misleading in modern English. See Gen. i. 29, 30, and Deut. xx. 20, where herbs and fruits are termed "meat." It will be remembered that the meat-offering did not consist of flesh, but of flour and oil and ears of corn (Lev. ii.).

(9) **Woman of Samaria** (twice).—Better, *Samaritan woman*. In both cases the Greek has the adjective. It is the religious and national position as a Samaritan which is prominent in this verse.

**Being a Jew.**—This she would know from dress and language. It has been noted that the Hebrew for "Give me to drink," "T$^{e}$ni lish$^{e}$koth," contains the letter Sin, or Shin, which was one of the distinctive points in the Ephraimite pronunciation. They did not say Shibboleth, but Sibboleth (Judges xii. 5, 6). They would not say "T$^{e}$ni lish$^{e}$koth," but "T$^{e}$ni lis$^{e}$koth."

**For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.**—The original has not the articles, *For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans*. This is a remark made by the writer to explain the point of the woman's question. She wondered that a Jew, weary and thirsty though he might be, should speak to her. For the origin of the Samaritans, see 2 Kings xvii. 24—41, and Note on Luke ix. 52. The later Jewish authors abound in terms of reproach for them—*e.g.*, "He who eats the bread of a Samaritan is as he who eats swine's flesh;" "No Samaritan shall be made a proselyte;" "They have no share in the resurrection of the dead" (*Pirke*, Rabbi Elieser, 38; comp. Farrar, *Life of Christ*, i. 209, note). Jesus Himself speaks of a Samaritan as an alien (Luke xvii. 16, 18; comp. x. 33), and is called a Samaritan and possessed of a devil (comp. chap. viii. 48). But the strictest Jews allowed exceptions to the forbidden intercourse. If bread was interdicted, fruit and vegetables were not; if boiled eggs were forbidden, fresh ones were not. At no time probably did the Galileans follow the practice of the Judæans in this matter, and hence they go to the city to buy food, while the woman asks this question of a Jew whom she met on the road from Jerusalem. Later, it was only "because His face was as though He would go to Jerusalem" that the Samaritan village did not receive Him; and it is the Evangelist of the Jerusalem ministry, who would have called down fire from heaven then, who adds this note of explanation for his Greek readers now (Luke ix. 52, 53).

(10) **If thou knewest the gift of God.**—Expositors differ very widely as to the meaning to be given to "the gift of God" and "living water." See, *e.g.*, the summaries of views in the notes of Meyer and Godet, both of which are now translated into English. Yet there can be little doubt of the true meaning if we observe the turn given to her question by the emphatic pronouns, "*Thou* wouldest have asked of *Him*." You stand by this deep well that for centuries has been God's gift of refreshment to man and beast; you have the means of drawing the water, and are thus the apparent benefactor to Him who asks for your aid. It is not really so. There is a deep well of spiritual truth in communion with God, as necessary for man's true life as water is for the natural life. I stand here with the means to draw, with the power to enter the depths hidden from man, and reveal to your spirit the Being of God. It is really you that are the traveller in the journey of life, weary with the burning heat of its trials, and travel-stained by the sins through which you have passed, thirsting in the hopes and fears of that spirit that cannot rest apart from God, helpless at the very side of the well, for the Eternal is ever near you, and you know Him not. If you knew this gift of God, and knew Who it is that is now here to reveal it to you, you would have asked, and He would have given you that Spirit, which would have been in you as a fountain of living water.

(11) **The woman saith unto him, Sir . . .**—Her tone changes to one of respect. Something in His voice and manner, it may be, has touched her. She does not understand His words, but she is conscious of their latent force. She feels the presence of One who teaches with authority, and the "Thou, being a Jew," passes to the reverential "Sir." Still, she does not see how He can give her living water. Where will He get it? He has no means for drawing it, and the water in the well is far below His reach. His word, too, strikes her, and she dwells on it;—"that living water." She thinks of spring water, as in Gen. xxvi. 19, and Lev. xiv. 5, where the Hebrew is "living water." He cannot draw from that well. Does He mean to say that He knows of another, with better water? The word used here for "well" is different from that in verse 6, where

water? (12) Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? (13) Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: (14) but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. (15) The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. (16) Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. (17) The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: (18) for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly. (19) The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. (20) Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought

the surface only was thought of. Here, and in the next verse, the depth is prominent, and we have the same word, which is rendered "pit," in Luke xiv. 5.

(12) **Art thou greater . . . ?**—Again, the pronoun is the emphatic word, "*Thou* surely art not greater." "The well used to satisfy the wants of the patriarch, and his household, and his flocks, and has come down from him to us. It is surely sufficient for all our wants." This claim of Jacob as their father was through Ephraim and Joseph, and the well was part of "the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph" (verse 5). There was abundance of water near to it, but a patriarchal household could not depend for a necessity of life upon neighbours who may be hostile, and Jacob had dug this well in his own purchased plot. It was sacred, then, as the very spot where their asserted ancestor had digged his well and built his altar. There was an unbroken continuity in the history of the place, and it was prized the more because it was not so in the history of the people.

(13, 14) **Whosoever drinketh of this water.**—Jesus does not answer her question, but asserts the universal recurrence of thirst, after even the water of Jacob's well, to lead her to the thought that His "living water" is something widely different.

(14) **The water that I shall give him.**—These words are emphatic as opposed to *this* water. It is not an external supply, which must be sought to meet the recurring physical want, but it is the inner never-failing source, the fountain of living water, which satisfies every want as it occurs. He who has it, therefore, can never thirst. Coming from the source of all life, it issues in eternal life. (Comp. Notes on chap. vii. 37, 38.)

(15) **Come hither.**—The Sinaitic and Vatican and some other MSS. read, "come through hither," or as Alford, who adopts the reading, renders it, "come all the way hither." Godet also adopts the reading, but renders it, in the service of a forced explanation, "pass by here," thinking that the woman was on her way home from work at meal-time, and that this accounts for her presence at the well at noon. He regards this as *sans doute*, but the reading itself is at least uncertain, and is probably to be explained by its first syllable being added from the last syllable of the previous word; and the translation is more than uncertain.

The woman understands the words in their physical sense. How many a toilsome hour, how many a weary journey would she be saved!

(16) **Go, call thy husband.**—She has asked for this living water. She knows not that the well must first be dug. In the depth of her spirit there is a power of life; but like the source of a spring, it is hidden. Many a hard rock of impenitence was there, and many a layer of every-day transgression, and many a habit once formable as clay, now hard as adamant, and many a deposit of carnal thought which had left nothing but its dregs behind. All this must be dug through before she can have the living water, and this well, too, must be deep. The command, "Go, call thy husband," is the first stroke breaking up the surface of that fair appearance, and revealing the foulness of the life beneath it.

(17) **I have no husband.**—The stroke has left its mark. It lays bare to her own consciousness the past and present life, but she does not know that it is laid bare to His. The reply is no longer prefaced by the half-sarcastic "Thou, being a Jew," or the reverential "Sir." The tone has passed from vivacity to earnestness, and from earnestness to sadness. That one word —what a history it has revealed! But she will hide it from Him and from herself. "I have no husband" (or, according to the Sinaitic MS., more emphatically still, *A husband I have not*).

(18) **In that saidst thou truly.**—The stroke goes deeper. It lays bare the secrets of all those years over which she thought the veil of the past had for ever been drawn. The bright days of joy and dark days of sin; the heart's promises made and broken; the sad days of death, which five times over had robbed her of a husband; or, worse than death, the sin which had severed the sacred bonds; the shame of the present shameless life—all these are at least hidden from a stranger. But His words pierce to the inmost thoughts, and prove Him to know all the acts of her life (verse 29). "Thou hast well said, A husband I have not. The holy name may not be given to the paramour thou now hast; with the loss of purity is linked the loss of truthfulness; the very truth thou utterest is meant to convey to Me an untruth, but to One who knows all, the words are really true;—"in *that* saidst thou truly."

(19) But who can it be who thus enters her mind and reads the pages of her memory as if it were a book? He must be as one of those of olden time of whom she has heard. The tone of reverence prevails again, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet."

(20) **Our fathers worshipped.**—She gives a sudden turn to the conversation. It is not that the question of worship is the all-engrossing problem of her mind, for which she seeks solution at this prophet's hands. Such questions hardly came then within the circle of a Samaritan woman's thoughts, and this woman's life had not been such as to make her an exception to the rule; but the heart, quivering before the eye that reads it as it never before had read itself, shrinks from the light that is let in upon it. She will speak of any-

to worship.[a] (21) Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. (22) Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. (23) But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father

[a] Deut. 12. 5.

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thing rather than of self. There is the mountain overhanging them, the theme of many a discussion between Samaritan and Jew; she will ask the prophet to decide that question.

(21) **Woman** (comp. Note on ii. 4), **believe me, the hour cometh.**—Better, *there cometh an hour.* The Authorised version of the latter clause gives the correct sense, if it is punctuated as follows: "When ye shall, neither in this mountain nor yet in Jerusalem, worship the Father;" "when ye shall worship, but without the limitation of holy places; when ye shall worship the Father of mankind, before whom Jew, and Samaritan, and Gentile are brethren." Both these thoughts are suggested by her words. She had referred in the past tense to the worship on Gerizim, when for more than a century and a half the temple had been in ruins, but she refers in the present to the temple at Jerusalem, where the form of worship was every day gone through. From that temple He had just come. The ruins of the one are before Him, the ruins of the other are present to His thoughts (chap. ii. 18—22). Both centres of local worship are to cease. She had referred more than once to the claim which arose from direct descent from the patriarch (verses 12—20). But *the* Father is God, and the hour coming, and then present (verse 23), in Christ's mission, had the Fatherhood of God and the sonship of humanity as its message to the world.

**In this mountain.**—Sychar was between Ebal and Gerizim, and she would point out the holy mountain with the ruins of the temple then in sight.

The contrast between "our fathers" and the emphatic "ye" carries back the thoughts to the rival temple and worship on Mount Gerizim from the time of Nehemiah. The enmity took its rise in the refusal to accept the help of the Samaritans in the restoration of the temple at Jerusalem (Ezra iv. 2; comp. 2 Kings xvii. 24 *et seq.*). The next step is recorded in Neh. xiii. 28. Manasseh, the son of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, had married a daughter of Sanballat, and was chased from Jerusalem. Sanballat thereupon supported his son-in-law in establishing a rival worship, but it is not clear that the temple was built until a century later, in the time of Alexander the Great. The authority for the details of the history is Josephus (*Ant.* xi. 8, § 2), but he seems to confuse Sanballat the Persian satrap, with Sanballat the Horonite. In any case, from the erection of the temple on Mount Gerizim, the schism was complete. The temple was destroyed by John Hyrcanus, about B.C. 129 (*Ant.* xiii. 9, § 1), but the mountain on which it stood continued to be, and is to this day, the holy place of the Samaritans. All travellers in the Holy Land describe their Passover, still eaten on this mountain in accordance with the ritual of the Pentateuch. They claimed that this mountain, and not Jerusalem, was the true scene of the sacrifice of Isaac, and Gentile tradition marked it out as the meeting-place with Melchizedek (Euseb. *Præp. Evang.* ix. 22). In accordance with their claim, they had changed in every instance the reading of the Pentateuch, "God will choose a spot" (Deut. xii. 14; xviii. 6, &c.), into "He has chosen," *i.e.*, Gerizim. "Ebal," in Deut. xxvii. 5, had become "Gerizim," and the Ten Commandments in Exodus and Deuteronomy are followed by an interpolated command to erect an altar in Mount Gerizim. Jerusalem, on the other hand, had never once been named in the Pentateuch, which was the only part of the Jewish canon which they accepted. It was but a modern city in comparison with the claim that Gerizin was a holy place from the time of Abraham downwards.

(22) **For salvation is of the Jews.**—This verse has sorely tried critics who seek to construct the Gospel out of their judgments of what it should be. It can be no difficulty to those who seek to form their judgments from the Gospel as it is. Assume that the Gospel belongs to the Greek thought of the close of the second century, and the verse must be omitted, though it is certainly part of the original text; accept the Gospel as belonging to the Hebrew thought of the first century, and this touch of Jewish theology is in entire harmony with it. The contrast between the Samaritan and the Jewish worship lay in its history, its state at that time, and its rejection of the fuller teaching of the prophetical books of the Old Testament. "In every way the Jews had much advantage, but chiefly that unto them were committed the oracles of God." Little as they knew the treasure they possessed, they were the guardians of spiritual truth for the world, and in a sense deeper than they could fathom, "salvation was of the Jews." (Comp. Rom. iii. 2; ix. 4, 5, Notes; Isa. ii. 3; Mic. iv. 2.)

The "we" of this verse is in answer to the "ye" of verse 20. She identifies Him with those who claim Jerusalem as the place of worship. That "ye" contained its own answer. In using it she had said that the Messiah was of the Jews.

(23) **But the hour cometh.**—Better, as in verse 21, *but there cometh an hour.* He adds to this thought, what He could not add to the previous one, "and now is." Local worship was not yet giving way to spiritual; but a band of true worshippers was being gathered, and some were then following Him.

**The true worshippers.**—Her distinction of place was of the accident, but the essence was the nature of the worship. What could any worship be to a God who saw the impurity of the heart, and the contradiction of thought and word? What could *she* know of the worship of which she speaks? Yes; and the temple at Jerusalem was a house of merchandise, instead of one of prayer; what did priest and Levite, scribe and Pharisee, know of true worship?

**In spirit and in truth.**—The link between human nature and the divine is in the human spirit, which is the shrine of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. vi. 19). All true approach to God must therefore be in spirit. (Comp. Rom. i. 9, and Eph. vi. 18.) Place, and time, and words, and postures, and sounds, and all things from without, are important only in so far as they aid in abstraction from the sensible world, and in elevation of the spirit within. The moment they distract they hinder true worship. Ritual cannot be discussed without risk of spiritual loss. The words "in truth," already expressed in *true* worshippers, and repeated in the following verse, are more than "truly." Sincerity is not a test of acceptable worship, though it is a requisite. Bigots sincerely think they do God's service. Worship which is "in seeketh such to worship him. (24) God *is* a Spirit:[a] and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth. (25) The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. (26) Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am *he*.

(27) And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?

(28) The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, (29) Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? (30) Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

(31) In the mean while his disciples

[a] 2 Cor. 3. 17.

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truth" is in harmony with the nature of the God whom we worship. To think of God in hearing His truth, to kindle the soul by hymns of praise, to realise the earlier portions of collects and prayers which utter His attributes, are necessary to the truth of the petitions, and thanksgivings, and adorations of worship. The model prayer of Christianity brings home to the heart the Fatherhood of God in its first words.

**For the Father seeketh such to worship him.**—Better, *for such the Father also seeketh His worshippers to be.* The word "such," *i.e., of this character*, is emphatic. The "also" expresses that the worship, on the part of the true worshippers, is in accordance with the divine will: "the Father also (on His part) . . ." The reader will not fail to note the emphasis in this reply on the word "Father" (verse 21 and twice in this verse). This name of God, which we teach children to lisp in earliest years, came to her, it may be, now for the first time. He is not Vengeance to be appeased, nor Power to be dreaded, but Love to be received. (Comp. Note on chap. iii. 16.) It is when men learn to think of God as Father that merely local and material worship must cease. The universal desire and practice of worship is the witness to a universal object of worship. The yearning of the human spirit is that of a child seeking the author of his being. The seeking is not human only. The Father also seeketh His child, and seeth him when he is a great way off (Luke xv. 20).

(24) **God is a Spirit.**—Better, *God is spirit.* His will has been expressed in the seeking. But His very nature and essence is spirit, and it follows from this that all true worship must be spiritual. The appeal is here made to a doctrine of special prominence in the Samaritan theology. They had altered a number of passages in the Pentateuch, which seemed to them to speak of God in language properly applicable to man, and to ascribe to Him human form and feelings. But to believe in the spiritual essence of God contained its own answer both as to place and mode of worship.

The second "Him" ("they that worship Him") should be omitted, as the italics show.

(25) **I know that Messias cometh.**—She is puzzled by these new doctrines. "Father!" "Spirit!" what did all this mean? Was God in any real sense like the father who in childhood's happy days had protected, and forgiven, and loved? Was the divine nature in any real sense approached by human nature in its highest and best moments, when it seemed lifted above earth, and things of the earth? Was there for her a Father who could still forgive, a Spirit whom her spirit could still love, and in the grasp of that love lift itself to virtue and truth? How different are His words to any she has ever heard before! She, as others, feels half unconsciously their power. Her answer is also a question. He, whom her countrymen called "The Converter," or "The Returner," and expected from such passages as Gen. xlix. 10 and Deut. xviii. 15, and whom the Hebrews called "Messias," and Hellenists called "Christ," would come, and with Him the answer to every question. She uses the present tense, "Messias cometh." Can it be that He stands before her now? (Comp. verse 29.)

(26) **I that speak unto thee.**—The announcement is being made. The solution of some of the problems which she connects with the Messianic advent is contained in the very words she has heard.

**Am he**—*i.e.*, the Messiah. (Comp. especially Notes on chap. viii. 24, 58.)

(27) **With the woman.**—Better, probably, *with a woman.* They are surprised, not at His talking with a Samaritan, but at His talking in public with a woman, which was directly contrary to the Rabbinic precepts. The words of the Law were to be burnt rather than taught to a woman. A man should not speak in public to his own wife. They would like to ask Him, as He asked some of them (chap. i. 38), what He sought to learn from her, or else to know what truth He would teach her (comp. "speakest" with "I that speak," in the last verse); but there is already a sense of the reverence due to Him, which checks the question as it rises to the lip.

(28) **The woman then left her waterpot.**—The waterpot left behind was a pledge of her return; and it is to us a mark of the presence of him who has related the incidents.

(29) **Is not this the Christ?**—Better, *is this the Christ?* She felt that He was a prophet when His words revealed her past life (verse 19). She has had the thought of Christ present to her mind when He teaches the nature of true worship (verse 25). She has heard that He is the Messiah from His own lips (verse 26); but she does not frame her question so as to expect the answer "Yes:" she states the fact of His knowing the life, known perhaps to many of them, and leaves them to form their own judgment.

(30) **Came unto him.**—Literally, *were coming unto Him.* They were still on the way when the conversation in verses 31—38 took place. The general expectation of the Messiah, and the receptive spirit of the Samaritans, is shown in her alacrity to go and tell the men of the place, and in their desire at once to see Him for themselves. Many, indeed, were convinced by her statement only (verses 39, 40).

(31) **Master.**—The Hebrew word Rabbi has been preserved in the earlier passages (chaps. i. 38, 49; iii. 2, 26), and will meet us again in vi. 25. It is less ambiguous than the English word, and should be restored here and in chaps. ix. 2 and xi. 28.

They had left Him weary by the side of the well (verse 6), and had gone to the town. They now return with the food they had obtained, and ask Him to partake of it.

prayed him, saying, Master, eat. (32) But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. (33) Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him *ought* to eat? (34) Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. (35) Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.[a] (36) And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. (37) And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. (38) I sent you to

[a] Matt. 9. 37.

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(32) **I have meat to eat that ye know not of.**—The emphasis is on the pronouns, which are opposed to each other. "Meat" is better rendered *food* (see Note on verse 8). The Greek word here is the same as in chap. vi. 27, 55.

(33) **Hath any man brought him ought to eat?**—The question expects the negative answer, "Surely no one hath brought Him anything to eat?" The only person with Him is this Samaritan woman. Surely she has not! They understand His words in the ordinary sense. He proceeds to explain their real meaning.

(34) **My meat.**—Better, *My food,* as before (verse 8).

**To do the will . . . . to finish.**—Better, *that I may do the will, . . . . that I may finish.* These verbs point out the end which He ever kept in view. In some of the best MSS., and in the received text, the tenses are different. That I may be constantly doing the will of Him that sent Me, and may then at last complete His work. (Comp. chap. xvii. 4.)

This work He speaks of here, and in verse 32, as actual food, as the supply of the truest needs, and the satisfaction of the truest desires of His nature. (Comp. Note on Matt. iv. 4.) Analogies to this are within the limits of every man's experience, and, faint as they are, help us to learn something of what this spiritual sustenance was. The command of duty, the cheering power of hope, the stimulus of success, are forces that supply to weak and weary nerves and muscles, the vigour of a new life. Under them the soldier can forget his wounds, the martyr smile at the lion or the flame, the worn-out traveller still plod onward at the thought of home. We cannot analyse this power, but it exists. They have food to eat that those without know not of.

(35) **Say not ye, There are yet four months.**—The emphasis in this verse should be laid upon "ye." It follows immediately out of the contrast between the natural and spiritual food. Every outer fact is the sign of an inner truth. They here, as the woman in verse 11, as the teacher of Israel (chap. iii. 4), as the Jews (chap. ii. 20), speak in the language of the outer facts only. He speaks of the spiritual realities. Looking on the fields of springing corn, they would say that in four months there would be harvest. He sees signs of life springing up from seed sown in receptive hearts; and eyes lifted up and directed to the wide fields of the world's nations would see that the fulness of time was come, and that the fields were even now white to harvest. The Samaritans coming to Him are as the firstfruits, the earnest of the abundant sheaves which shall follow.

**Four months.**—This gives us probably a note on time. There is no evidence that it was a proverbial saying, and the form of the sentence is against the supposition. The legal beginning of harvest was fixed (Lev. xxiii. 10; Deut. xvi. 9) for the 16th of Nisan (April). This would give us in that year, which was a Jewish leap-year, with a month added (Wieseler's *Synopsis,* Eng. Trans., p. 187), some time about the middle of the month Tebeth (January) as the date of this conversation. (Comp. chap. v. 1.) For the idea of the harvest, comp. Matt. ix. 36—38, and the parable of the Sower, Matt. xiii. 3 *et seq.*

(36) **And he that reapeth.**—The wages of the reaper is the joy—the greatest that the heart can know—of gathering others, as men gather corn into the garner, into eternal life. The sower is Christ Himself, whose words have been the seed in the woman's heart, already bringing forth a harvest in those who are coming to Him. The reapers are the disciples. In this harvest day they would learn, from sympathy with the souls of others, the joy of the reaper, and in that joy it was ordained that sower and reaper should rejoice together.

(37) **Herein is that saying true**—*i.e.,* in the deeper sense of the word true (comp. Note on chap. i. 9)—has its realisation; is ideally true. The proverb itself was known both to the Greeks and to the Romans (see examples in Schöttgen and Lampe), but the reference is probably to the Old Testament Scriptures. Those who heard it would certainly think of such passages as Deut. vi. 11, or Isa. lxv. 21, 22. The saying expressed something of the bitterness of human disappointment, which in darker moments all men have felt. They have sown in hopes and plans and works, which have never sprung above the surface, or have been reaped in their results by other men; or they themselves have passed away before the harvest has come. This is as men see it, but this is not the ideal truth. The saying is realised in the relation between sower and reaper, which was true then, and holds true of every sower who really sows the good seed. He, too, has a daily work and a daily sustenance in the will of Him that sent him. In the inner consciousness of that work being done, and the hope of its completion, he has food no less real than that of him who reaps the harvest. That he stands alone is the result of his rising above his generation; that he is little understood, or rewarded, by those for whom he works, will be a disappointment to his friends, but, in his truest thoughts, not to himself. His satisfaction will be hard for men to understand. "Surely no one has brought him to eat!" "I have food to eat that ye know not of." Men smile at this as sentiment or enthusiasm; but this food has been the strength of the best lives, and noblest deeds, of humanity.

(38) **I sent you to reap . . .**—The pronouns are again emphatic. "*I* sent *you* to reap;" and the statement is of wide meaning. He is ever *the* Sower. All others are more or less fully reapers, though in the degree in which they really reap they will become likened unto Him, and will become sowers too. We all inherit from the past the greatest part of our mental and spiritual knowledge. The child of to-day knows more than the philosopher of early history.

reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

(39) And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did. (40) So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days. (41) And many more believed because of his own word; (42) and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard *him* ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

(43) Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee. (44) For Jesus himself testified,[a] that a prophet hath no honour in his own country. (45) Then when he was come into Galilee the Galilæans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.

(46) So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine.[b] And there was a certain nobleman,[1]

[a] Matt. 13. 57.

[b] ch. 2. 1.

[1] Or, *courtier*, or, *ruler*.

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**Other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.**—Or, *others have laboured.* In the immediate application to the present case, the "others" is to be interpreted of Christ Himself, who had been sowing during their absence, and it may be of the woman who has sown this seed by her testimony to the Samaritans. Or the plural may be chosen as in contrast with the plural *ye*, and as pointing to the general truth, while the immediate reference is to Christ only.

(39) **Many of the Samaritans of that city believed.**—The willingness to receive the truth on the part of the Samaritans, is contrasted with the rejection of it on the part of the Jews. They refused the witness of a great prophet; these accept the witness of a woman. Their minds were prepared by the general expectation of the Messiah; and this woman witnesses that Jesus had revealed to her the whole past of her life. There is here a sign they do not question.

(40) **When the Samaritans were come.**—The next step in their faith is to go to Him and ask Him to remain with them, that they too may learn from Him; and He, a Jew, accepts the hospitality of Samaria, and abides with them for two days.

(41) **And many more believed.**—The veil is left upon those two days, as upon so many days in the life of Christ. We know how much was said at the well in a few minutes, and that many believed on Him in a few hours. What questions they must have asked! What truths He must have taught during this sojourn! How that central truth of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man must have burned in the hearts of this mixed and despised people! Salvation was of the Jews, and they were from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim. But Fatherhood is a truth for every heart of man, and He who thus linked heaven and earth was the Saviour of the world. We know not what words passed from them to Him, from Him to them; but we know that the result was that many more believed, and that those who before believed on testimony passed to the higher faith of personal conviction.

(42) **We have heard him ourselves.**—The "Him" is not part of the original text, and the sentence is more forcible without it: *We have ourselves heard.* Probably "the Christ" should also be regarded as no part of the original text, and the last clause should be, *and know that this is truly the Saviour of the world.* The result of their hearing is that they know. There is here, as frequently in St. John, stress laid upon the development of faith. We shall find it again in the following verses, which mark it in the case of the courtier.

(43) **Two days.**—Literally, *the two days.* It is the time mentioned in verse 40, not a second period of two days.

(44) **A prophet hath no honour.**—The statement that a prophet hath no honour in his own country is at first thought a strange explanation of the fact that He went into Galilee, and that the Galileans received Him; and the common geographical solutions, as that "His own country" means Judæa, or Nazareth, as distinct from Galilee, or the district of the so-called lower Galilee, are brought to, not from, the text. The narrative of the earlier Gospels places the commencement of the ministry in Galilee. John has in these opening chapters told of an earlier ministry in Judæa and Samaria. He now records the reception in Galilee to which this earlier ministry had been the real introduction. Jesus Himself said so. He knew the principle that a prophet's own friends are the last to hear his message, and He came to His own country only when that message had been received by many in Judæa and Samaria, and when His own countrymen had seen and known His work at the Passover. Others had received Him at Jerusalem, and they therefore receive Him in Galilee. The honour is brought from without. It does not arise in His own country.

(45) **All the things that he did.**—See the reference in chap. ii. 23 to the unrecorded work at Jerusalem.

(46) **So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee.**—He returns to the place where He had manifested His glory and knit to Himself in closer union the first band of disciples. This thought is present to the writer as the reason why He went there. It was the place "where He made the water wine."

**And there was a certain nobleman.**—The margin shows the difference of opinion among our translators as to what English word gives the true idea of the position of the person who is in the text called "nobleman." The Greek word is an adjective formed from the word for "king," and as a substantive occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It is frequent in Josephus, who uses it in our sense of courtier, or for a civil or military officer, but not for one of the royal family. The king, whose "king's man" is here spoken of, was almost certainly Herod Antipas, who was left the kingdom in his father's first will, and is called "king" by St. Matthew (xiv. 9) and by St. Mark (vi. 14). The person here named may therefore be a "royalist" or "Herodian" (comp. Matt. xxii. 16; Mark iii. 6), but in a domestic incident like this the reference would be to his social position rather than to his political opinions. Perhaps "king's officer" whose son was sick at Capernaum. (47) When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judæa into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. (48) Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. (49) The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. (50) Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. (51) And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told *him,* saying, Thy son liveth. (52) Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. (53) So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him,

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represents the vagueness of the original better than any other English term. It is not improbable that the person was Chuza, and that his wife's presence in the band of women who followed Christ (Luke viii. 3) is to be traced to the restoration of her child. For the position of Capernaum, see Note on Matt. iv. 13.

(47) The distance of Capernaum from Cana was from twenty to twenty-five miles. The report of Christ's return to Galilee had spread, then, over this wide area.

(48) **Signs and wonders.**—See Note on chap. ii. 11. The words are here addressed to Jews, for there is no reason to think that the nobleman himself was not one. They are spoken to him, but the *ye* extends them to others standing near and to the class of persons whom he represents. It had been so with the Jews in Jerusalem (chap. ii. 18, 23), and it was so with the Jews in Galilee. (Comp. 1 Cor. i. 22.) How different from this faith, which demanded a miracle, and therefore was not faith, but sight, was the acceptance by the Samaritans without a miracle, who believed for the woman's word, and more fully when they heard the word of Christ Himself.

**Ye will not believe.**—The negative is in its strongest form, *Ye will by no means believe.*

(49) **Ere my child die.**—But human sorrow is the birth-pang of faith. The sense of utter powerlessness leads the soul to cast itself on the Strong One for strength. The faith is still weak, but it is there. It does not realise that Christ can speak the word and heal the child, but it does feel that His presence could save him, and pleads as a father for his son. "Come down, ere my child die."

(50) **Go thy way.**—His faith is to be strengthened, and is to pass beyond a trust in aid through bodily presence. Jesus will not go down, but he is himself to go with the assurance, "Thy son liveth." Up to this point he had believed on the testimony of others, but he, too, now believes on account of the word of Christ Himself.

**Had spoken unto him.**—Better, *spake unto him.* The word he believed was that spoken then.

(51) **And as he was now going.**—Many a long mile lay between him and his child, and many an anxious thought must have come to his mind as he journeyed homeward. Now faith would be strong, and now almost give way; but he travels on with the words, "Thy son liveth," which had come to him as a voice from heaven, sustaining and cheering him. Again he hears the same words, "Thy son liveth!" but they are spoken by the servants, who have come to meet him, and bring from Capernaum the glad news that he had himself heard at Cana.

(52) **Then enquired he of them.**—But these two facts—the assurance at Cana, and the actual healing powers at Capernaum—were they in truth related to each other? He remembers the hour at which one was spoken; he inquires the hour at which the other was realised. He does not even now grasp the full meaning of the words, and thinks of the gradual abatement of the fever, and the slow convalescence, and asks when the child "began to amend." They have seen the sudden change as of a new power passing into the body on the point of death. They have spoken of this as a new life, and they now think of the fever as having completely left him.

**Yesterday at the seventh hour.**—We have seen (chap. i. 39) that there is no sufficient reason for thinking that St. John uses the western method of counting the hours of the day. Still less is it likely that Galilean servants, who are here the speakers, should have done so. To believe, moreover, that it was seven o'clock in the morning or evening adds to, and does not remove, the difficulty of the length of time implied in "yesterday." To say that the father remained some time with Jesus, and that "the believer doth not make haste," is to pervert both the spirit and the words of the text. He clearly went at once (verse 50), and his anxiety naturally quickened his speed. The distance was not more than twenty-five English miles, and he had not travelled the whole of it, for the servants had gone to meet him. The supposed explanation cannot therefore be explained. But the words, if taken in their simple meaning, involve no such difficulty. These Jews, as all Jews, meant by the "seventh hour" the seventh from sunrise, what we should call one o'clock. After sunset the same evening they would have commenced a new day (comp. *Excursus F.*), and this seventh hour would be to them as one o'clock the day before, or the seventh hour yesterday. We have thus an interval of five or six hours between the words spoken by our Lord and their confirmation by the servants.

(53) **So the father knew.**—He was not mistaken, then. The power he had felt when these words were spoken to him was real. The hours that had passed since, as he hastened to know all, had prepared him to read the sign. "Thy son liveth!" "The seventh hour yesterday!" There is more than one miracle here. A new life passes into his own spirit, and he, too, bound in the death-grasp of a formal religion, liveth! A Father's love has yearned for him. Christ has come down ere the child died.

**Himself believed.**—This is a yet higher faith. He believed the report before he went to Cana. He believed personally when he pleaded, "Lord, come down." He believed the word that Jesus spake when told to go his way, and every step of that road going away from the power to the sufferer was an act of faith; but still there is place for a fuller faith, and he and his household became believers. St. John traces here, as

Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house. (54) This *is* again the second miracle *that* Jesus did, when he was come out of Judæa into Galilee.

CHAPTER V.—(1) After this there was a feast of the Jews;[a] and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. (2) Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep *market*[1] a

A.D. 31.

[a] Lev. 23. 2; Deut. 16. 1.

[1] Or, *gate.*

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before, in the case of the Samaritans (verses 41, 42), and of the disciples themselves (chap. ii. 11), the successive development of faith.

(54) **This is again the second.**—The English version has inserted the article, which is not found in the Greek, and has added in italics *is* and *that.* Omitting these additions, and remembering that in St. John's language every miracle has its deeper teaching, the verse will read, "This again, a second sign, did Jesus when he was come out of Judæa into Galilee." His first presence in Galilee was marked by a sign (chap. ii. 1—11), and this visit is also. There the individual disciples, who were to leave home and follow him, read the lesson the sign was meant to teach. Now for the first time the family is the unit in the Christian life, and the father, himself taught to read the sign, becomes the first teacher, and representative, of the first Christian household.

This miracle of healing naturally brings to the thoughts the healing of the centurion's servant. See Notes on Matt. viii. 5 *et seq.*, and Luke vii. 2 *et seq.* To some minds, from Irenæus downwards, the resemblance has seemed so striking that nothing short of identification could explain it. But there is no *à priori* reason why two miracles should not be performed under circumstances in some respects analogous, and the knowledge of the healing in this case may well have led to the faith in that. If we bear in mind that the miracle is ever to be regarded as the parable in act, it is probable that the acts of Christ would be repeated. Repetition is a part of the method of every great teacher, and formed a large part in the Rabbinic systems. Jesus Christ was, it is true, infinitely above all human teachers, but His hearers were ordinary men, and His teaching and working must have adapted itself to the constitution of the human mind. A comparison of the present narratives will establish the following points of difference, which in their totality amount, it is believed, to little short of proof, that St. John has added the history of a sign which is not recorded in the earlier Gospels.

(1) It is here a nobleman who pleads for his son; there a centurion for his servant (Matt. viii. 6; Luke vii. 2).

(2) Here the pleading is in person; there the elders of the Jews intercede (Luke vii. 3).

(3) Here the nobleman is almost certainly a Jew; there the centurion is certainly a Gentile (Matt. viii. 10 *et seq.*; Luke vii. 9).

(4) Here the words of miracle are spoken at Cana; there at Capernaum (Matt. viii. 5; Luke vii. 1).

(5) Here the illness is a fever; there paralysis (Matt. viii. 6).

(6) Here the father pleads that Jesus will go down with him; there the centurion deprecates His going, and asks Him to command with a word only (Matt. viii. 7; Luke vii. 7).

(7) Here the Lord speaks the word only, and does not go down; there apparently He does both (Matt. viii. 13; Luke vii. 6).

(8) Here the Lord blames the half-faith which demands signs and wonders; there He marvels at the fulness of faith, and, it may be in reference to this very nobleman, says, "In no one have I found so great faith in Israel" (Matt. viii. 10).

## V.

[3. **The fuller Revelation, and Growth of Unbelief among the Jews** (chaps. v. 1—xii. 50).
  (1) JESUS IS LIFE (chaps. v. 1—vi. 71).
    (*a*) *This follows from the unity of Son and Father* (chap. v.).
      (α) Energy given to strengthen the weak (verses 1—9).
      (β) Persecution by the Jews (verses 10—18).
      (γ) Teaching of Jesus (verses 19—47):
        The Father's work also the Son's (verses 19 and 20);
        The spiritual resurrection and judgment (verses 21—27);
        The physical resurrection and judgment (verses 28—30);
        Witness, and the reason of its rejection (verses 31—47).]

(1) **A feast of the Jews.**—The writer does not tell us what feast this was, and we must be content to remain without certain knowledge. There is, perhaps, no Jewish feast with which it has not been identified, and it has been even proclaimed confidently that it must have been the Day of Atonement! (Caspari, *Chron. and Geogr., Introd.*, Eng. Trans., p. 130). Our reading is to be regarded as the better one, though not a few authorities insert the article, and interpret "*the* Feast" to mean the Feast of Passover.

The time-limits are chap. iv. 35, which was in Tebeth (January), and chap. vi. 4, which bring us to the next Passover in Nisan (April), *i.e.*, an interval of four months, the year being an intercalary one with the month V$^{e}$Adar (and Adar) added, or, as we should say, with two months of March. The only feast which falls in this interval is the Feast of Purim, and it is with this that the best modern opinion identifies the feast of our text. It was kept on the 14th of Adar (March), in commemoration of the deliverance of the Jews from the plots of Haman, and took its name from the lots cast by him (Esth. iii. 7; ix. 24 *et seq.*). It was one of the most popular feasts (Jos. *Ant.* xi. 6, § 13), and was characterised by festive rejoicings, presents, and gifts to the poor. At the same time it was not one of the great feasts, and while the writer names the Passover (chaps. ii. 13; vi. 4; xiii. 1), the Feast of Tabernacles (chap. vii. 2), and even that of the Dedication (chap. x. 22), this has no further importance in the narrative than to account for the fact of Jesus being again in Jerusalem. (Comp. *Introduction: Chronological Harmony of the Gospels*, p. xxxv.)

(2) **Now there is at Jerusalem.**—We have no certain knowledge of the time referred to in the last, nor of the place referred to in this, verse. For "sheep-market," we should read with the margin, *sheep-gate* (Neh. iii. 1, 32; xii. 39). This gate was known well enough to fix the locality of the pool, but is itself now unknown. St. Stephen's Gate, which has been the traditional identification, did not exist until the time of Agrippa. There is something tempting in the interpretation of the Vulgate adopted by some modern travellers and commentators, which supplies the substantive from the immediate context, and reads "sheep-pool." But the fact that the Greek adjective

pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. (3) In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. (4) For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. (5) And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. (6) When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time *in that case*, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? (7) The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down

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for "sheep," is used here only in the New Testament, and in the Old Testament only in the passages of Nehemiah referred to above, seems to fix the meaning beyond doubt.

**Bethesda** means "house of mercy." The "Hebrew tongue" is the then current Hebrew, what we ordinarily call Aramaic, or Syro-Chaldaic. The spot is pointed out traditionally as *Birket Israil*, near the fort of Antonia, but since Dr. Robinson's rejection of this, it has been generally abandoned. He himself adopted the "Fountain of the Virgin," which is intermittent. He saw the water rise to the height of a foot in five minutes, and was told that this occurs sometimes two or three times a day. The fountain is connected with the pool of Siloam, and probably with the fountain under the Grand Mosque. The seventh edition of Alford's *Commentary* contains an interesting letter, pointing out that Siloam itself was probably the pool of Bethesda, and that the remains of four columns in the east wall of the pool, with four others in the centre, show that there was a structure half covering it, which resting upon four columns would give five spaces or porches. The fact that this pool is called Siloam in chap. ix. 7 does not oppose this view. The word "called" here, is more exactly *surnamed*, and "House of Mercy" may well have been given to the structure, and thus extended to the pool in addition to its own name. But to pass from the uncertain, it is established beyond doubt, (1) that there are, and then were, on the east of Jerusalem mineral springs; (2) that these are, and then were, intermittent; and (3) that such springs are resorted to in the East just as they are in Europe.

(3) **In these lay a great multitude.**—The word "great" before multitude, and the latter clause of the verse "waiting for the moving of the water," and the whole of verse 4, is omitted by most of the oldest MSS., including the Sinaitic and the Vatican, and is judged to be no part of the original text by a consensus of modern editors, including Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, and Westcott and Hort. It is interesting to note how a gloss like this has found its way into the narrative, and, for ninety-nine out of every hundred readers, is now regarded as an integral part of St. John's Gospel. We meet with it very early. It is found in the Alexandrian MS., and in the Latin and early Syrian versions. Tertullian refers to it. This points to a wide acceptance from the second century downwards, and points doubtless to the popular interpretation of that day. It explains the man's own view in verse 7, and the fact of the multitude assembled round the pool (verse 3). The bubbling water moving as it were with life, and in its healing power seeming to convey new energy to blind and halt and lame, was to them as the presence of a living messenger of God. They knew not its constituent elements, and could not trace the law of its action, but they knew the Source of all good, who gave intellect to man and healing influence to matter, effect to the remedy and skill to the physician, and they accepted the gift as direct from Him. Scientists of the present century will smile at these Christians of the second century. The Biblical critic is glad that he can remove these words from the record, and cannot be called upon to explain them. But it may be fairly asked, which is most truly scientific—to grasp the Ultimate Cause of all, even without the knowledge of intermediate links; or to trace these links, and express them in so-called laws, and make these abstract laws lifeless representatives of the living God? There is a *via media* which, here as elsewhere, wisdom will seek rather than either extreme. All true theology must be, in the best sense, scientific; and all true science must be, in the best sense, religious.

(5) **Thirty and eight years.**—The period expresses, not his age on the one hand, nor the time of his being at Bethesda on the other, but the time during which he had suffered from the infirmity. Helpless and friendless, having spent half the lot of human life in that condition, he appeals without an uttered word to the Mercy which is present in the House of Mercy; and to him alone of those He healed does Christ of His own accord address the first question. The infirmity was in some way connected with youthful sin (verse 14), and the sufferer and his history would be well known to those at Jerusalem. The exact knowledge of the writer tells us that for thirty-eight years he had paid sin's penalty.

(6) And now Jesus sees him lying there among the throng of sufferers, and every ache of every limb, and every sorrow of every heart told of the perfection of life marred by the curse of sin; but this man's own sin had left its mark upon him, which men may read and condemn, though within the whited fairness of their own outer deeds, the soul's life was by sin palsied to its very core. But he hears, in tones that went to the heart as he listened to them, the strange question, stranger indeed than "Wilt thou . . . . ," "*Willest thou* to be made whole?"

(7) What does the question mean? Will this Stranger, whom he has never seen before, do for him what none of those who often saw him had ever done? Will he watch for the bubbling water, and place him first in it? Is there one being in all the world who regards his state as calling for loving pity, rather than scornful loathing?

**I have no man.**—There is an eloquence of helplessness more powerful than that of words. Day by day he has watched, listened for the first sound, caught the first movement in the bath, summoned the feeble vestiges of strength to an action on which all depended, and hoping each succeeding time, in spite of despair in which last time's hope has been engulfed, has been coming, when "another goeth down before." "I have no man" is to-day the helpless, unspoken cry of thousands imaged here.

before me. (8) Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. (9) And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.

(10) The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry *thy* bed.[a] (11) He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. (12) Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? (13) And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being[1] in *that* place. (14) Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing

[1] Or, *from the multitude that was.*

[a] Jer. 17. 22.

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(8) **Jesus saith unto him.**—There is no formal demand, or formal statement of faith as preceding the healing. (Comp., *e.g.*, Notes on Matt. xiii. 58; Mark ix. 24.) Men have often wondered at this. If faith is an expression in words or anything outside man, then there is room for wonder; but if it be a living principle, the "seeing Him who is invisible" (Heb. xi. 27), then surely we may seek in vain for a more striking instance of its power than in this man; who in all, and through all, and in spite of all, trusted in, and looked for, the mercy of God, and had faith to be healed.

Jesus sees in him this receptive power, which in his very helplessness is strength, and calls it forth. He who could barely move is told to rise! he who had for eight-and-thirty years lain on his bed is to carry that bed and walk!

(9) **The man was made whole.**—The sufferer was known; the healing is in the striking form that none could gainsay.

(10) **The Jews therefore said unto him.**—But what they cannot deny they can cavil at. One might have expected from human hearts wonder and thankfulness that the man could walk at all. We find from the formalism which had bound the letter round men until it had well nigh crushed all heart out of them, the murmur that the carrying of his bed was not lawful on the Sabbath. This is not the only place in this Gospel where the words and works of Christ clashed with the current views of the sanctity of the Sabbath day. (Comp. chaps. vii. 24; ix. 14.) The general question has been treated in Notes on Matt. xii. 10—12. Here it will be sufficient to note that the bearing of burdens was specially forbidden in the Prophecy of Jeremiah: "Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day" (xvii. 21; comp. Neh. xiii. 15 *et seq.*), and that the Rabbis pressed this to include a burden of any kind. They said, for example, "If any man on the Sabbath bring in or take out anything on the Sabbath from a public to a private place, if thoughtlessly he hath done this he shall sacrifice for his sin; but if wilfully, he shall be cut off and shall be stoned."

(11) **He that made me whole.**—The man bases the use of his power upon the will of Him who had given it. That has been the one divine voice he has heard, and it cannot be wrong for him to obey it.

(12) **What man is that which said unto thee . . . ?**—They pass over the giving of the power, and quote only the command which comes under their technical prohibition. The life and strength of once-palsied limb is as nothing; the fact that this man was breaking their tradition is secondary. The real motive is a charge against Him whose power the body of the Jewish people was feeling as a life-current, quickening deadened energies, and rousing men to a sense of God's presence in their midst. Aye, and these Jews of Judaism feel the thrill of this current all around them, though their will tries to isolate them by the coldness of unbelief from a power which they have not directed, and which they refuse to be directed by. Men and women who have been all their lives lying in moral helplessness, waiting and looking for God, yet never helped by God's priests and rulers, are now standing and moving in the strength that their new Teacher gives. They cannot deny it, but can they prevent it? This spirit is life, but there is still the letter which killeth. It cuts them to the heart to see His power in their midst, but there is the body of Rabbinic precept and oral law. He has now crossed that. They will apply it to stamp out His work and kill Him.

**Take up thy bed, and walk.**—Omit "thy bed," with the best MSS. It is inserted from the previous verse. Their passionate question expresses itself in the fewest words.

(13) **For Jesus had conveyed himself away.**—The second clause of this verse, as is shown by the marginal rendering, was not intended by our translators to convey the impression that a crowd had assembled round the scene of the miracle, and that to avoid this Jesus passed away from the place. In that case the man must have known who He was. Still the English does probably convey this meaning to most readers, and it would be better to give a freer rendering—*For Jesus disappeared among the multitude which was in the place.* The presence of the multitude is not given as the reason for His going away, but as explaining the fact that He passed on with them after having spoken to the man, and was thus unknown to him.

(14) **Afterward.**—There is no mark of time. Probably it was on the same day. Perhaps the first use of his restored power was to go to the Temple and pay his thank-offering to God.

**Sin no more.**—These words connect his past sufferings with individual sin. He has been freed from the effects, but if they have been truly remedial he has been freed from the cause too. He is in God's house. Let him accept restored powers as God's gift, and let their devotion be the true thank-offering. The imperative is present, and points to a permanent condition of life—"Be not any more a sinner."

**A worse thing.**—There is, then, something worse than a life of unmoving helplessness. There is a sadness of tone even as He says, "Behold, thou art made whole;" just as there is a sigh when He says, "Ephphatha: Be opened!" (Mark vii. 34). There are men for whom it had been good never to have been born (Matt. xxvi. 24). There are limbs that had better never have moved. There are lives that had better have sunk in the negative inaction of death, than have cursed themselves and others in positive deed and speech and thought of life. The power of existence is of infinite grandeur, but it is also of infinite responsibility. It has within its reach the highest good for self and for come unto thee. (15) The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole. (16) And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

(17) But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. (18) Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

(19) Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. (20) For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth

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mankind; but if the God-given power is sacrificed to sin there is within its reach an unutterable depth of woe.

(15) **The man departed, and told the Jews.**—We are not told what reason underlay his report to the Jews. It is natural that he should give the answer which he could not give before (verse 13), and that he should wish to secure himself from the charge of Sabbath-breaking by supplying his authority. The narrative does not suggest that he did this in a tone of defiance, which has been found here from a remembrance of chap. ix., still less that he used his new strength immediately to bring a charge against the Giver of it. The impression is rather, that he felt that this power came from a prophet sent by God, and that he told this to those who were God's representatives to the nation, supposing that they would recognise Him too.

(16) The words, "and sought to slay Him," should be omitted. They have been inserted in some MSS. to explain the first clause of verse 18. For "He had done," read *He was doing.* The word is in the imperfect tense, expressing continuance or custom. It is either that from this one instance they generalise a law of practice to justify their persecution, or that some of the earlier unrecorded miracles were also performed on the Sabbath. (Comp. Luke vi. 1—11.)

(17) **My Father worketh hitherto** (or, *up to this moment*).—They charge Him with breaking the law of God. His answer to this charge is that His action was the result of His Sonship and unity with that God. The very idea of God implied action. This was familiar to the thought of the day. Comp., *e.g.*, in the contemporary Philo, "God never ceases working; but as to burn is the property of fire, and to be cold is the property of snow, thus also to work is the property of God, and much the more, inasmuch as He is the origin of action for all others" (*Legis Allegor.* i. 3. See the whole section. The English reader will find it in Bohn's Ed., vol i., p. 53). The rest on the seventh day was the completion of the works of creation (see this stated emphatically in Gen. ii. 2, 3). It was not, it could not be, a cessation in divine work, or in the flow of divine energy. That knew nor day nor night, nor summer nor winter, nor Sabbath nor Jubilee. For man, and animal, and tree, and field, this alternation of a time of production and a time of reception was needed, but God was the ever-constant source of energy and life for all in heaven and earth and sea. The power going forth to heal that sufferer was the same power which sustained them in well-being. The strength which passed through his half-dead frame, and bade it live, was the same which every Sabbath morning awoke them from death's image, sleep, and would awake from death itself (verse 21). The sun shone, and fruitful showers fell, and flower burst its bud, and harvest ripened, and they themselves, in energy of life, had grown on every day alike. God ever worketh up to this present moment. That God is also Father. The Son, therefore, worketh in the same way. This poor sufferer, lying helpless, is of the same human nature with the Son of God. He has in faith and hope made himself receptive of the divine energy, and that energy which can know no Sabbath, but is ever going forth to every heart that can receive it, hath made him whole.

(18) For "had broken," read *did He break,* and for "His Father," *His own Father.* They recognise as beyond doubt what He means by the term "My Father," and the attribute of ceaseless energy. It was a claim which none other had ever made, that God was in a peculiar sense His own Father. They feel it is a claim to divinity, a "making Himself equal with God."

**The more to kill him.**— This implies what is included in the persecution of verse 16. (Comp. Matt. xii. 14; Mark iii. 6; Luke vi. 7—11.)

(19) **The Son can do nothing of himself.**—The key to this and the following verses is in the relation of Father and Son, from which they start. The Jews saw in this equality with God blasphemy, and sought to kill Him. Men have since seen and now see in it inferiority, and a proof that Christ did not claim for Himself the glory which the Apostle claims for Him in the prologue (chap. i. 1—18), and which the Church has ever in reverent adoration placed as a crown upon His brow. The words "Son," "Father," are the answer to both. Did they accuse Him of blasphemy? He is a Son. The very essence of blasphemy was independence of, and rivalry with, God. He claimed no such position, but was as a Son subject to His Father's will, was as a Son *morally* unable to do anything of Himself, and did whatever He saw the Father do. Yea, more. He thought not His equality with God a thing to be seized, but emptied Himself and became, as they then saw Him, in the form of a servant, and in the likeness of men. (Comp. Notes on Phil. ii. 6 *et seq.*)

(20) **For the Father loveth the Son.**—Do men deny His divinity? God is His Father. There is, therefore, oneness of essence. The unity of His work with God's work has for its basis the Eternal Love, which showeth to the Son all that the Father doeth. As the relation of Son implies moral inability to do anything apart from the Father, so the relation of Father implies moral necessity to impart all to the Son.

**Greater works than these.**—The works which He had done could only be explained by the unity of His work with that of the Father; but in the development of His own human nature and His mediatorial work, there will be shown to Him, and He will show to man by doing them in their midst, works of which these are but as the first signs. The "ye" is emphatic, and the word "marvel" should also be noticed. "Ye who seek to kill Me shall yourselves see works which, against your will, shall be wonders to you; but against your will they cannot be signs. Ye will marvel, but ye will not believe!"

him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

(21) For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth *them;* even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. (22) For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: (23) that all *men* should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. (24) Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. (25) Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. (26) For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

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(21) The following verses (21—29) show what these greater works are. They are the Resurrection and the Judgment; but these are regarded as spiritual as well as physical, as present as well as future. Once again the background of the thought is to be found in verse 17. Resurrection and Judgment were the work of the Father—"My Father worketh hitherto;" but the manifestation in limits of space and time is the work of the Son—"and I work."

**For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them.**—The "them" after "quickeneth" is better omitted. The words are purposely general. Raising the dead and making alive are attributes of God. "He kills and He makes alive" (Deut. xxxii. 39). "He bringeth down to the underworld and bringeth up" (1 Sam. ii. 6; Tobit xiii. 2). "He has the power of life and death" (Wisd. xvi. 13). These the Son seeth the Father doing, and these also He doeth in like manner. He, too, has the power to quicken whom He will, and He useth that power. Deadened souls have felt it, and are living in the new-born life. There is in His word, for the man who hears it and believes it, a moral change which is nothing other than an actual passing out of death into life (verse 24).

(22) **For the Father judgeth no man.**—Better, *For not even doth the Father judge any man;* and if not the Father, to whom judgment belongs, then none other but the Son to whom He hath committed all judgment. To judge (comp. verse 29) is the opposite of to quicken in the previous verse. The fact that the Son hath power to judge is correlative with His power to quicken whom He will. The spiritual life given to, and received by, some (verse 24), is a separation from, and a judgment of, others. The eternal life which shall be given to some, shall be the eternal separation from, and exclusion of, others. The reason why judgment is committed to the Son is given in verse 27 as resulting from His humanity. It is stated here as resulting from His divinity. It is that this power, like the quickening power of verse 21, should lead all to give to the Son honour equal to that which they render to the Father. Again, this relation is urged against those who professed to honour God, and as a proof of it were seeking to kill His Son. That Sonship, expressing at once subordination and unity, necessarily involved the Fatherhood. To reject Him was to reject the Father who sent Him. (Comp. verses 24, 30, 36, 37.)

(24) **Verily, verily, I say unto you.**—(Comp. verses 19 and 25, and Note on chap. i. 51.) For "shall not come into condemnation," read *doth not come into judgment.* (Comp. Note on chap. iii. 18.)

The repeated "verily" introduces, as elsewhere, one of the deeper spiritual truths which He came to teach. This truth explains the "whom He willeth" of verse 21 to have no limit but that of human receptivity. It again brings out the unity of Father and Son. The Son's word is the revelation of the Father. He that hears this word believes not on Him only, but on Him that sent Him (comp. chap. xii. 44). It asserts that eternal life is not of the future only, but is already in germ possessed by the man who is thus brought into communion with the source of life. (Comp. 1 John i. 2.) This man comes not into judgment. There can be for him no separation from God, no condemnation. He has already passed from the state of death to that of life. What remains for him is the development of life.

**Believeth on him that sent me.**—Better, *believeth Him that sent Me.*

(25) **The hour is coming.**—The same solemn words repeat in another form the same great truth. The reference here, as in the whole of this paragraph (verses 21—27), is to the spiritually dead. This is shown by the "now is," which cannot be applied to the physical resurrection (comp. verse 28), and cannot be explained by the instances of physical restoration to life during the earthly ministry of our Lord; and also by the last clause, where "live" must mean the higher spiritual life, as it does in the whole context. It is shown too by the parallelism of the clauses with those of the previous verse:—

"He that heareth" . . . . "the dead shall hear"
"My word" . . . . "the voice of the Son of God,"
"Hath eternal life" . . . . "they that hear shall live."

The world is as a vast moral graveyard where men lie dead in sin,—sense-bound hand and foot, with spirits buried in bodies which should be holy temples, but have become as unclean tombs; but the voice of the Son of God speaks, and spirit, love, life, passes through the chambers of death, quickening souls whose death is as yet but a sleep, and those who hear and obey come forth into new life.

(26) **Hath he given to the Son.**—Better, *gave He to the Son also.*

**Life in himself.**—The Son has spoken of the dead hearing His voice and living, but this giving of life to others can only be by one who has in himself an original source of life. This the Father has, and this the Son also has. To the Son in His pre-existent state it was natural, as being equal with the Father. To the Son who had emptied Himself of the exercise of the attributes which constituted the glory of that state (comp. again Phil. ii. 6 *et seq.*), it was part of the Father's gift by which He exalted Him exceedingly, and gave Him the name which is above every name. It was, then, a gift in time to One who had possessed it before all time, and for the purposes of the mediatorial work had relinquished it. It was a gift, not to the Eternal Son, but to the Incarnate Word.

(27) and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

(28) Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, (29) and shall come forth; they that have done good,[a] unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (30) I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

(31) If I bear witness of myself,[b] my witness is not true. (32) There is another that beareth witness of me;[c] and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. (33) Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto

[b] See ch. 8. 14.

[c] Matt. 3. 17.

[a] Matt. 25. 46.

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(27) **Hath given.**—As above, *gave.* The "also" after judgment should be omitted. In these verses, as before, the two relations of Father—Son, Life—Judgment, are emphatic. Both Life and Judgment can belong to God only, but both are the Father's gift to the Son.

**The Son of man.**—Render, *a son of man.* The term differs by the striking omission of articles from the usual term for the Messiah, and occurs again in Rev. i. 13, xiv. 14. It is here in contrast to the "Son of God" in verse 25. The explanation is, once more, to be found in the thought of the Incarnation as an emptying Himself of the attributes which are the glories of the divine nature. It is not because He is Messiah (*the* Son of Man), but human (*a* son of man), that the Father gave Him the power to have life in Himself, and the authority to execute judgment. (See Note on verse 26.) Still His humanity is not *here* dwelt upon as a qualification for the office of judge, because it is of the same nature as that of those He judges. This thought and the thoughts which flow from it (comp. Acts xvii. 31) are full of beauty and truth, but the side of truth prominent in this verse, and all those which follow verse 17, is not His relation to man, but His relation to God. All are a sermon on the text, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

(28) **Marvel not at this**—*i.e.,* that He has Himself a source of life and authority to judge. There shall follow from this "greater works," at which they shall marvel. There is an hour coming (here not with the addition "and now is," verse 25) when the victory over physical death shall also make manifest this life, for "all that are in the graves" shall hear His voice, and the final judgment shall declare to the universe His authority to judge.

(29) **Damnation.**—Better, *judgment.* See Note on chap. iii. 20. On "done good" and "done (*practised*) evil," see Notes on chap. iii. 20, 21. It is remarkable that these are the only instances where the words here and there used for "practise" and for "evil" occur in St. John. This double opposition, and the use of words which He does not use again, support the distinction in the earlier Note. The passages are comments on each other. The law of the spiritual resurrection now is the law of that which shall be hereafter. Those who, working out the truth, come to the light now, that their deeds may be manifested, because they are wrought in God, shall in the final testing, when the secrets of every heart shall be revealed, rise unto the resurrection of life, to dwell in eternal light. Those who, practising evil, choose the darkness now, shall in that final testing, when whatsoever has been spoken in the darkness shall be heard in the light, rise unto the resurrection of condemnation (Acts xxiv. 15), bound in chains of darkness, and be cast into outer darkness. (Comp. Notes on Matt. viii. 12 and xxv. 46 and 1 Cor. iii. 13 *et seq.*)

(30) For "the will of the Father which hath sent Me," in the last clause, read, with nearly all the best MSS., *the will of Him that sent Me.* (Comp. verses 36 and 37.)

The verse is the expression, once again, but now with special reference to judgment, of the thought with which the discourse opened, and which runs as a current through the whole. (Comp. Notes on verses 19 and 22). As in all His works (verse 19), so in the greater works of life-giving (verse 26) and of judgment, the Son cannot act apart from the Father. The judgment must be just, because it is not one of an isolated will, but one in accord with the eternal will of God. He seeth the Father's works (verse 19), and in like manner doeth them; He heareth the Father's will, and that alone He seeketh.

The tenses in this verse are present, and the judgment is therefore to be interpreted without limitation of time. It is one which He is evermore passing on every act and word and thought. (Comp. chap. ix. 39.)

(31) **If I bear witness of myself.**—This verse is the link between the thoughts of Christ's person (verses 17—30) and the witness to Him (verses 32—40). He can do nothing of Himself (verse 30), and does not even bear witness of Himself. If He did, it would be on technical grounds not to be credited. He meets the objection then doubtless in their minds, and soon expressed in their words. (Comp. Notes on chap. viii. 13—18.)

(32) **There is another . . .**—*i.e.,* the Father. The reference to the Baptist is excluded by the words which follow. The difficulty which has been seen in this indirect reference to the Father is removed if we connect the words closely with those preceding them. The point is in the fact that another, different in personality from Himself, bore witness of Him. (Comp. chap. viii. 50; Matt. x. 28, *et al.*)

**I know . . .**—This has seemed to have a natural meaning if it is the authority given to John's witness, but to be less fitting if applied to the Father's. In two of the oldest MSS., and some of the earliest versions, we read "ye know," and this has been adopted by some modern editors; but the origin of this reading is obvious, and there is no sufficient reason for departing from the common text. Its meaning is quite in harmony with the relation of the Son to the Father, which has been dwelt upon. The Father beareth witness, is bearing witness (comp. verse 37), in the unity of work which Son and Father alike work (verses 17, 19, 20, 30), and the Son knows that His power to do this work can come from no other source. His own nature responds to the Father's voice; He knows it to be true. (Comp. chap. iii. 33.)

(33) **Ye sent . . .**—Both verbs are perfects. Better, therefore, *Ye have sent; He hath borne witness.* The pronoun "ye" is emphatically opposed to the "I" of the following verse. They sought human witness. He had witness which was divine. The object of John's mission was to bear witness of the Light (chap. i. 7), and this he did to them (chap. i. 19 *et seq.*)

the truth.[a] (34) But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. (35) He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

(36) But I have greater witness than *that* of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. (37) And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me.[b] Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.[c] (38) And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

[a] ch. 1. 7.

[b] Matt. 3. 17, and 17. 5.

[c] Deut. 4. 12.

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(34) **But I receive not testimony . . .**—There is no reason for changing the word. The substantive, and verbs from verse 31, have been rendered by "witness," and it is better to keep it here. The English also fails to give the article, and is therefore misleading. He did receive witness from men—had received witness from John—but this was not *the witness* upon which all was based. Its purpose was to lead them to Christ Himself, and He now refers to it, to show them its true position, that that purpose might be fulfilled.

**But these things I say, that ye might be saved.**—The emphasis of the clause should be placed upon the pronoun "ye." The thought is, that our Lord does not refer to John's witness for His own sake, but in order that they might be saved. He had a greater witness than that of John, but this they were not yet prepared to receive. They had received John for a season, and had rejoiced in his light. He refers to him now that that light may lead them to the true Source of Light. Some of those who had sent to the Baptist may now understand his words in a deeper sense than any which had come to them before, and may find in them words leading to salvation.

(35) **He was a burning and a shining light.**—Better, *He was the lamp that is lighted and* (then) *giveth light.* The statement of the Prologue, "He was not the Light, but came to bear witness of the Light" (chap. i. 8), shows how important this change is. The word rendered "light" occurs again in Matt. v. 15; vi. 22; Mark iv. 21; Luke viii. 16; xi. 33, 34, 36; xii. 35; xv. 8; 2 Pet. i. 19; Rev. xviii. 23; xxi. 23; xxii. 5. The reader who will take the trouble to compare these passages, will see clearly the difference in the Greek words. It should be *lamp* in all these instances. The article in "*the* lamp" is to be explained from a reference to the one lamp of every home. (Comp. Notes on Matt. v. 15 and Mark iv. 21.) The term was in common use to denote a distinguished hero or teacher. The Rabbis were often called "Lamps of the Law," and David was "The Lamp of Israel" (2 Sam. xxi. 17). Comp. the remarkable parallel spoken of the Baptist's great prototype, "Then stood up Elias the prophet, as fire, and his word was kindled like a lamp" (Ecclus. xlviii. 1). Others explain the words here of the promised lamp which was to appear, or of the torchbearer who lights the bridegroom's path.

**Ye were willing . . .**—John's work came to them as light in darkness. It attracted them. They went to it. They were willing to find a source of joy in it. They sent to ask him questions, but they heeded not his answers. But the light came to them not to amuse them, but to lead them. He gave light because he had been kindled at the Source of all Light. He came to bear witness to them of the true Light, from which his was derived. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 23.) Their action with regard to John was part of the negatively evil, unreal character condemned in chap. iii. 20. They professed to be men, and teachers of other men; but when speaking of this John, our Lord found a similitude of their generation in the changing moods of little children playing in the market-place (Matt. xi. 16).

(36) For "hath given Me" read, with the better MSS., *gave Me.* The pronouns in "But I have" and in "that I do," are emphatic.

In this verse He returns to the thought of verse 32. The parenthesis in verses 33—35 show that John was not the other there spoken of, and this verse shows that the special form of witness which He referred to was that of the works, which works He was then doing, and the voice of which they ought to have heard.

These "works" are not confined to what we speak of as miracles, but include the several parts of His Messianic work, which it was His food to finish (chap. iv. 34), and which He speaks of as finished (chap. xvii. 4; see Note there). There is a special reference here to the power to quicken and authority to judge, in verses 21, 22.

(37) **Hath borne witness of me.**—The marginal reference interprets this testimony of the Father by the voices from heaven spoken at the Baptism and on the Mount of Transfiguration. Both are indeed illustrations, and are naturally suggested by the imagery of voice and shape in the latter half of the verse; but one was at this moment in the future, and the other was a definite event which would have required a more definite reference. The Greek, indeed, distinguishes between the Incarnation at a definite point in time and the witness which was continued—*And the Father Himself which sent Me* (not "hath sent Me") *hath borne witness of Me.*

"His voice" and "His shape" are both general, and the "at any time" extends over the whole duration of previous revelation. Literally the clause is, *Voice of Him ye have not at any time heard, nor shape of Him have ye seen.* The reference to the revelation of the Old Testament Scriptures is, moreover, demanded by the immediate context, while the voice at the Baptism and the Transfiguration are not only absent from the present circle of thoughts, but also from St. John's Gospel. Jesus is answering a charge of breaking God's law, and of making Himself equal with God because he has claimed God's fatherhood in word for Himself, and has manifested it in life-power for man. That charge was but an example of their unreceptive spirit. Through the whole history of the nation, He had been revealing Himself to them. Through the chief knowledge-giving senses, eye and ear, they should have learnt in that past history to see God in the act of mercy, to hear Him in the word of love. They jealous for God's honour! Ah! it was then as it had been ever. Voice of God they could not hear. Vision of God they could not see.

(38) **Abiding in you.**—This striking thought of the word taking up its abode in the mind, and forming the mind in which it dwells, meets us only in St. John. (Comp. chap. xv. 7; 1 John ii. 14, 24; iii. 9, 17; and Note on chap. vi. 36.) They had, indeed, the word of

(39) Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. (40) And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. (41) I receive not honour from men.

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God, but they had it not as a power ever living in them. They locked it up with sacred care in ark and synagogue, but it found no home in their inmost life, and had no real power on their practice. They could take it up and put it down. It was something outside themselves. Had it been in them, it would have produced in them a moral consciousness, which would have accepted, as of the same nature with itself, every fuller revelation from God. Their own spirits, moulded by the word of God dwelling in them, would have received the Word of God now among them. (Comp. *Excursus A: Doctrine of the Word.*) The fact that they believed not Him whom God *sent* (not "hath sent") was itself the proof that they had not the abiding word.

(39) **Search the scriptures.**—Better, *Ye search the Scriptures.* The question whether the mood is imperative or indicative, whether we have here a commandment to examine the writings of the Old Testament canon, or a reference to their habit of doing so, is one which has been discussed through the whole history of New Testament exposition, and one on which the opinion of those best qualified to judge has been, and is, almost equally divided. It is not a question of the form of the Greek word, for it may certainly be either. The English reader therefore is in a position to form his own opinion, and is in possession of almost all the evidence. He should observe that all the parallel verbs in the context are in the indicative—"Ye have neither heard" . . . "nor have seen" (verse 37); "Ye have not His Word . . . ye believe not" (verse 38); "Ye think that . . . ye have" (verse 39); "Ye will not . . ye might have" (verse 40). Why should there be a sudden change of construction in this instance only?

We find, then, this order of thought. (1) God has in the Old Testament witnessed of Me, but ye, with unreceptive hearts, have never heard a voice nor seen a shape of God (verse 37). (2) Ye have not His word dwelling in you, or it would have witnessed of Me (verse 38). (3) Instead of receiving the Scriptures as a living power within you, ye search and explain the letter of them from without (verse 39). (4) Ye think they contain eternal life, and hence your reverence for them (verse 39). (5) They really are witnesses of Me, and yet you, seeking in them eternal life, are not willing to come to Me that ye may have this life.

It is believed that this is the most natural interpretation of the words, and that it gives a fuller meaning than any other to the teaching of Christ.

The only objection to it of weight is that the Greek word for "search" (ἐρευνᾶτε) is one which would not have implied blame. It means to search after, track, inquire after (comp. chap. vii. 52); but, surely, this is just the expression for the literal spirit in which the Rabbis treated their Scriptures. Moreover, it is not the searching which is matter for blame, but the fact of the searching and not finding, which is matter for wonder.

Here, too, as elsewhere, the argument from the meaning of a Greek word must be pressed only within strict limits when we remember that it represents in translation a late Hebrew original. The Hebrew language had a word which just at that time was frequent on every Rabbi's lips, and which exactly corresponds to it. As early as the Book of Chronicles we find mention of the *Midrashim*, or *Commentaries* in the sense in which this word is used, *e.g.*, in "Cæsar's *Commentaries.*" The rest of the Acts of Abijah are "written in the Midrash of the prophet Iddo" (2 Chron. xiii. 22). More than we now know of the history of Joash is "written in the Midrash of the Book of Kings" (2 Chron. xxiv. 27). In both cases our Authorised version renders the word by "story;" but this was at a time when its connection with "history" as involving "inquiry" was not forgotten. (Comp. *The Translators to the Reader*:—"This will be easily granted by as many as know story, or have any experience.") These Midrashim sprang up after the Captivity, when the people had lost the older language of the Law and the Prophets; and paraphrases, expositions, and homilies, became at first indeed necessary, but grew into a vast and intricate system with "Secrets" and "Precepts," and "Fences" and "Traditions of Elders" (Matt. xv. 2; Mark vii. 3), which gave abundant room for the learning and pride of men, but made the word of God of none effect (Matt. xv. 6; Mark vii. 13). Now, the period of the arrangement of the Midrashim of the Law commenced half a century before the ministry of Christ. Hillel the First succeeded to the presidency of the Sanhedrin, B.C. 30, and Akiba, his successor in the compilation of the Mishna, was a boy when these words were spoken. The influence of the former was all-powerful among those who now accused Jesus of breaking what the Law did not contain but the Midrash did. Those who now listened to Christ were disciples or assistants of the great Rabbi whose school of a thousand pupils left eighty names of note.

May it not be, then, that the true meaning of these words is to be found in their bearing upon these Rabbinic lives and works?—"Ye make your Midrashim on the Scriptures; ye explain, and comment, and seek for hidden mystic meaning; ye do all this because ye think they contain eternal life; their true meaning is not hidden; they tell of life, and ye who seek it do not hear them, and will not come unto Me that ye might have life."

(40) **And ye will not come to me.**—The real hindrance is once more traced to the will. (See Note on chap. iii. 9.) It is moral, not intellectual. The result of a true willingness to know the truth is certain, not problematic. "Ye search because ye think ye have: if ye were willing to come, ye should really have."

The lesson is wide in its bearing. The Rabbinic spirit is not confined to Rabbis, nor is the merely literal study of the Scriptures limited to those of Judæa. Dictionaries, and grammars, and commentaries, are tools; but the precious ore is in the mine, and is to be extracted by every man for himself. He who wisely uses the best means will know most of God and His truth; but this knowledge no man can purchase, and the essentials of it none need lack. It is to be learned in the closet, rather than in the library; in action and trust, rather than in scholarship and thought. Religion is not philosophy, and the world by knowledge has never known God. For every humble heart that willeth to be a scholar, God Himself willeth to be the Teacher.

(41) **I receive not honour.**—The word is better rendered *glory* here, and in verse 44. Jesus continues to dwell, in the remainder of the discourse (verses 41—47), on the true cause of their incredulity. "Ye

(42) But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. (43) I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. (44) How can ye believe,[a] which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that *cometh* from God only? (45) Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is *one* that accuseth you, *even* Moses, in whom ye trust. (46) For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.[b] (47) But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

[a] ch. 12. 43.
[b] Gen. 3. 15; Deut 18. 15.

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will not come to Me," is the central thought. But were they, then, to follow this young Teacher, while they themselves had schools and disciples who held their teaching sacred, and their persons in honour, and addressed them as "Rabbi?" No! this is not the true coming to Him. They seek glory from men. He does not receive it (verse 34).

(42) **Ye have not the love of God.**—The principle which excludes the seeking honour from men, is the love of God. They were, they said, jealous for God's honour. The first precept of the Law, and the foundation of the Theocracy, was the love of God. This every Jew professed, and bound round brow and arm the holy texts which declared it (Deut. vi. 4—9; xi. 13—21). The Pharisees made broad the phylacteries which contained these words (Matt. xxiii. 5). They had them without, but they had not the principle within. There were sure marks which He had read in the heart as plain as the letters worn on the body, and therefore knew that they had not the love of God in them.

(43) **I am come in my Father's name.**—So far from self-assertion or honour-seeking, He came in the name of, as representing, the Father, guided only by His will, doing only His work (chap. iv. 34). Had they loved the Father, they must have received and reverenced His Son (chap. viii. 42; Matt. xxi. 37 *et seq.*). The absence of love is at the root of the rejection. The true Israelite became the true Christian (chap. i. 47), but these were not true members of the Old Covenant, and could not therefore pass into the New.

**If another shall come in his own name.**—Comp. the direct prophecy of false Christs and prophets in Matt. xxiv. 24, and see Note there. The word "come" in this clause links the meaning with that of the "come" in the previous clause, and is to be understood of a false Messianic claim in opposition to the true. Sixty-four false Christs have been enumerated as appearing after the true Christ, and these words are often taken as a prophecy of one of the most famous of these, as Bar-Kochba. Not a few of the Fathers have understood the words of Antichrist. Perhaps the only definite reference is to the mental condition of the Jews. They would receive any other who came in his own authority, and seeking his own glory. There would be no higher principle to which everything must yield. The seeker of power would fulfil their carnal interpretation of Messianic hopes. He would flatter and honour them, and therefore they would receive him.

(44) **How can ye believe . . ?**—The emphasis is again on the pronoun. It is not possible that *ye* should believe in Me, as our whole position is entirely different. Ye receive glory from men. I do not (verse 41). I am come in My Father's name (verse 43). Ye do not seek the glory which is from God. We are, then, in wholly distinct spheres of life, and action, and thought. To believe would be to give up your whole present life. While ye are what ye are, it cannot be.

The marginal reference compares the parallel thought of chap. xii. 43. This is obscured in the English version by a difference of words for the same Greek word. Here, as in verse 41, it would be more exact to read *glory* for "honour," and in chap. xii. 43, *glory* for "praise."

**From God only.**—Better, *from the only God.* Comp. Rom. xvi. 27; 1 Tim. i. 17, and vi. 15, 16; Jude 25. The article before "glory" should be noted. They received glory one of another. They sought not *the* glory, which was a divine attribute. (Comp. chap. i. 14.) Their charge against Him was that He made Himself equal with God. Thinking themselves monotheists, they were really idolaters. Each man, receiving glory from another, was in the place of a god to that other. Each man giving this glory to another, was rendering to a fellow man that which belonged to God only. They, not He, were robbing God of His glory.

(45) **Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father.**—His words were words of direct accusation, which must have cut to the very quick. He had come from the Father, and it might have seemed to follow from what He said, that He would accuse them to the Father. He guards against this misinterpretation. Love cannot accuse; He cannot be an accuser. He is ever a judge, only because love must judge hatred, and light must judge darkness, by revealing it. (Comp. Note on chap. iii. 19.) And yet the very revelation of love and light condemns hatred and darkness. The heart, then, needs no accuser, for it accuses itself; it needs no sentence, for it condemns itself. There is no penalty so fearful as that of the soul which is awakened to its own sin, and cannot itself forgive that sin, and, therefore, cannot receive the forgiveness of the Infinite Love, which always forgives. Their accusation was their rejection of light and love in the past, and Moses was their accuser. This is the thought of the following verses.

(46) **For had ye believed Moses.**—The present incredulity springs from that of the past. If they had really believed Moses, they would have seen in the whole spirit of the Pentateuch a manifestation of God, which would have led them to the fuller manifestation in Christ. Worship, and sacrifice, and offering, and priesthood, were all meant to teach. Their very name for "law" (*Thorah*) meant "instruction." But they accepted what the senses could know, and never went down beneath this surface to its true significance—*i.e.*, they never *believed* Moses. We have here, in another form, the thought of verses 39, 40.

**For he wrote of me.**—See the marginal references; but the thought is not to be confined to these passages.

(47) The emphasis of the contrast here is not between "writings" and "words," but between "his" and "My." It is a repetition of the thought of the previous verse, with an advance in time. They had not believed Moses, and therefore had not believed Him. They do not believe, for they do not read the spiritual meaning of the writings of Moses even now. What ground of hope is left? His words, revealing the deeper truths of the kingdom of God, will fall upon their ears as so many unmeaning sounds. (Comp. Note on chap. iii. 12.)

CHAPTER VI. — (1) After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is *the sea* of Tiberias. (2) And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. (3) And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. (4) And the passover,[a] a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

(5) When Jesus then lifted up *his* eyes,[b] and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? (6) And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.

A.D. 32.

[a] Lev. 23. 5; Deut. 16. 1.

[b] Matt. 14. 14.

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VI.

[(1) JESUS IS LIFE (*continued*).

(*b*) *His Incarnation is life for mankind* (chap. vi.).

- (α) Food given to sustain the hungry (verses 1—15).
- (β) His body not subject to natural laws (verses 16—21).
- (γ) The multitude follow Him (verses 22—25).
- (δ) Teaching of Jesus (verses 26—58):
  - The work of God (verses 26—29);
  - The Bread of Life (verses 30—50);
  - The true food (flesh) and the true drink (blood) (verses 51—58).
- (ε) The effect of the teaching—on the one hand defection, on the other a fuller confession of faith (verses 59—71).]

The feeding of the Five Thousand is the one miracle related in every Gospel. See Matt. xiv. 13—21; Mark vi. 30—44; Luke ix. 10—17, and Notes at these places, for the position in the narrative and the common incidents. Here it will be enough to mark the details peculiar to St. John.

The fact that this miracle of the Galilean ministry finds a place also in the record of the Judæan ministry, is to be explained by the discourse which follows. Here, as elsewhere, the principle which has guided the writer's choice is that the sign is a teaching by work (comp. Note on chap. ii. 11), and that those signs produce the fullest faith and life (chap. xx. 31) which led up to the fullest teaching by word. We shall find, too (verse 41), that the discourse is addressed to Jews of Jerusalem among others, so that the chapter, though belonging locally to Galilee, is really within the sphere of St. John's narrative.

(1) **After these things . . .**—Allowing an undefined interval, which is filled up by the earlier Gospels. We need not adopt the purely arbitrary supposition that a portion of the Gospel between chaps. v. and vi. has been lost, nor yet connect them in immediate order of time. For St. John the discourse is that for which the whole is recorded. The exact sequence of events is by him left undetermined.

**Went over the sea of Galilee**—*i.e.*, crossed over from Galilee to the eastern side of the lake.

**Sea of Tiberias.**—Comp. chap. xxi. 1; but the phrases are not precisely the same. There it is simply "sea of Tiberias." Here it is "sea of Galilee, of Tiberias," the latter term being either an alternative rendering for Greek readers (comp. Note on chap. i. 28), or a limitation to that part of the lake which was opposite to Tiberias. We shall find reason to believe that the last chapter of the Gospel should be regarded as an appendix, and the present passage may mark the transition between the older names for the lake which meet us in the other Gospels, and the later name, which meets us for the first time in St. John, but was afterwards common in Greek writers. The town itself is named in the New Testament only in this chap., verse 23. It was on the west of the lake, and is the present well-known *Tabarîyeh.* Built by Herod the Tetrarch, it was, in accordance with the Herodian policy of courting Rome, named after the Emperor Tiberius. Eusebius tells us that it was commenced in the fourteenth year of Tiberius, which is itself an uncertain date (comp. Note on chap. ii. 20); but we may accept it as placing the building in the time of our Lord, and as explaining that the name of the town does not meet us in the earlier Gospels, while it has at a late date, and at all events for Greek readers, extended to the lake.

(2) **A great multitude . . .**—This is explained by the facts (1) that the Baptist had been put to death, and that those who had followed him would now follow Christ; (2) that the Twelve had now returned from their ministry in the towns and villages of Galilee; (3) that the Passover was at hand, and that numbers would be flocking from Northern Palestine to Jerusalem.

**Followed . . . saw . . . did.**—Better, *were following . . . were beholding . . . was doing.* The verbs express a continuance of the actions. It does not mean simply that they saw these miracles on the west of the lake, and followed Him across it; but that He kept on healing the sick, and that the crowds kept on following Him. The usual caravan-road for the northern pilgrims was on the east side of the lake, and the throng would increase as He went.

(3) **A mountain.**—Better, *the mountain,* or, perhaps, the *hill-country* on the east shore of the sea. See the parallel passages.

(4) **A feast.**—Better, *the feast.* Comp. chap. v. 1. This is added by St. John only, and is not simply a note of time, but gives a key of interpretation to the sign itself, and to the discourse which followed.

(5) The converse with Philip is also peculiar to this Gospel. (Comp. chap. xiv. 8 *et seq.*) The impression of the immediate antecedents of the miracle is different from, but not opposed to, that of the other narratives. They all represent the request coming from the disciples as the first step. St. John does not say it was not so. They represent what took place as seen from the outer circle; he, from the point of view of those near to his Master. We may think of the group of disciples seated round Him, and of the first-called Andrew and Peter, James and John, and Philip (comp. chap. i. 40 *et seq.*) as closer to Him than the others, who come and speak to Him about the multitudes. While the wants of all are present, the wants of the individuals are not absent. There is something in the character of Philip which this occasion may test. To him is the question spoken which may yet have been an answer to their remark. For "saw a great company come," read *saw that a great multitude cometh.* It is the vivid present of the crowd coming. "Whence shall we buy bread . . .?" or rather, *Whence are we to buy bread?* with the best MSS.

(6) **And this he said to prove him.**—This gives us a glimpse into the educational method of the

(7) Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. (8) One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, (9) There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? (10) And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. (11) And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. (12) When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. (13) Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. (14) Then those men, when they had seen the

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great Teacher. There is for Him no difficulty. He of Himself knows what He is about to do. But Philip had, we may think, been present at Cana of Galilee, and had seen the wine multiplied to supply the needs of all. Other signs had spoken to the eye, and a fuller teaching had spoken to the ear. How far had either spoken to the spirit? He had felt the Divine Presence in separate instances. Had he realised it as a law of life, holding for every need that could arise? The student has learnt individual facts, but has he laid hold of the principle which underlies them? The one is from without, and depends upon the teacher; the other is from within, and is the true education of the man himself. He has been taught; he is now to be examined.

(7) **Philip answered him.**—The answer proves that Philip has not really learnt the lessons of the earlier teaching. The question does not suggest to him the true answer of divine sufficiency, but leads him to think of the human difficulty. He looks on the vast throng of people. At the lowest estimate, it would take the value of 200 denarii to feed them—in present money-value nearly £7; in actual labour-value nearly a workman's yearly wage. The denarius is the value of a day's work in the parable (Matt. xx. 2 *et seq.*). In A.D. 14, on the accession of Tiberius, one of the causes of revolt in the Pannonian legions is the smallness of their pay, and one of their demands (Tacit. *Ann.* i. 26) is a penny a day. For Philip this large sum seems an impossibility. He states the difficulty, and leaves it.

(8) **One of his disciples.**—Within the inner circle around Him—and this, too, is told us only by St. John—is another of the early disciples. He was one of the two disciples of the Baptist who first followed Jesus, and John's own companion (chap. i. 40). He is always named as one of the first group of the Twelve (comp. Note on Matt. x. 2), and in some way was specially connected with Philip (chap. i. 44). Here, and in chap xii. 22 (see Note), they are named together, and also in the lists in Mark iii. 18 and Acts i. 13.

(9) Again the account of the eye-witness is the more full and life-like. All tell of the five loaves and two fishes. John knows that they are barley loaves—the ordinary black bread of the Galilean peasant; and that the loaves and fishes are not the property of the disciples, but of a lad or slave who has followed the crowd, in the hope, it may be, of finding a purchaser for them.

The word for "lad" is a diminutive occurring only here (not in the best text of Matt. xi. 16), and in many MSS. is accompanied by "one." The word may mean a servant, but it more probably means a child. One lad! What could he bear for so many?

**Two small fishes.**—Better, *two fishes.* This word, too, is rightly regarded as a diminutive, but it is not a diminutive of "fish." The original root means *to boil;* thus the substantive is used, as in Homer, of boiled meat, and then of anything eaten as a relish with bread, and specially of fish. This diminutive is used in the New Testament only here and in verse 11, and in chap. xxi. verses 9, 10, 13. A comparison of the passages will make it clear that St. John means by the word the ordinary relish of fish, which formed, with bread, the staple food of the people.

The whole force of Andrew's remark, with its diminutive words, rests upon the smallness of their power to help, while Philip had dwelt on the greatness of the need.

(10) **Much grass.**—This is an addition in this account. St. Mark, who also represents the impression of an eye-witness, tells us that the grass was green (chap. vi. 39). We know from verse 4 that it was at the time of the Passover—*i.e.*, about our April, when the hill-country on the west of the lake would naturally be clothed with verdure.

**So the men sat down.**—The word (ἄνδρες) means *men* as such, as distinct from women. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 51.) St. Matthew tells us there were five thousand men besides the women and children (chap. xiv. 21; see Note there).

(11) The better MSS. omit "to the disciples, and the disciples to." It is included in the sense, but is not here expressed in word.

(12) **Gather up the fragments.**—Again St. John connects immediately with our Lord what the other Evangelists relate of the disciples. It is from this passage only that we know that the gathering of the fragments followed His express command.

(13) Comp. Note on Matt. xiv. 20.

(14) **Miracle.**—Better, *sign.* (Comp. chap. ii. 11.)

**That Jesus did.**—Better, *that He did.* The example is instructive, as showing how words were added at the beginning of a portion read in church. See, among other examples in the Book of Common Prayer, the Gospels for St. John the Evangelist's Day (John xxi. 19), Quinquagesima (Luke xviii. 31), the Third Sunday in Lent (Luke xi. 14), the Fifth Sunday in Lent (John viii. 46), the Second Sunday after Easter (John x. 11).

**This is of a truth that prophet.**—This verse is peculiar to St. John. The reception or rejection of Christ is always present to his thoughts. He remembers that the effect of the miracle on the minds of those men, was that they were convinced that this was the Prophet whom they expected, and for whom they had before taken John the Baptist (chap. i. 21).

miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.

(15) When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

(16) And when even was *now* come,[a] his disciples went down unto the sea, (17) and entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. (18) And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. (19) So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid. (20) But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid. (21) Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

(22) The day following, when the people

[a] Matt. 14. 23.

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(15) **When Jesus therefore perceived . . . .**—St. John has told us of the effect of the sign on the multitude. He knows also the reason of Christ's retirement, while St. Matthew and St. Mark only state the fact that He retired to pray. They knew not that He wished to avoid that throng of people who thought of the Messiah as a temporal king, and would have borne Him with them to the great feast at the royal city. St. Luke does not contain this section, but comp. the question recorded by him in chap. ix. 18 *et seq.*, which grows immediately out of it.

**A mountain.**—Better, *the mountain*, or *the hill-country* (verse 3). He withdrew again to the place where He was before.

(16) **And when even was now come.**—Comp. Note on Matt. xiv. 15, 23.

(17) For "a ship," the received text has, with some of the best MSS., *the ship*—*i.e.*, the ship in which they first crossed. For "went over the sea," read *were going over the sea.* The voyage is described as still continuing.

**Toward Capernaum.**—St. Matthew speaks more generally of the other (*i.e.*, the western) side. St. Mark of Bethsaida, which was distinct from Bethsaida Julias, which was on the east of the lake. (Comp. Note on Luke ix. 10.) For an account of Capernaum, see Matt. iv. 13, and in this chap. verse 59.

(18) **And the sea arose.**—Better, *was rising.* The tense is still imperfect, describing the scene as it took place. The sea was then being agitated by the wind.

(19) **Five and twenty or thirty furlongs**—*i.e.*, about half their voyage. Josephus describes the lake as forty furlongs wide (*Wars*, iii. 10, § 7). Comp. Matt. xiv. 25.

(20) See the same words in Mark vi. 50. St. Matthew's account is more full here, adding the trial of St. Peter's faith.

(21) **Then they willingly received him.**—This is doubtless correct as an interpretation, but it is too full for a translation. The Greek cannot mean more than, "Then they were willing to receive Him." They are re-assured by His voice, and their fears cease. That they did receive Him into the ship is stated by St. Matthew and St. Mark, and is implied here. That the words may mean more than a "wish" to receive Him is shown by St. John's usage in chaps. i. 44, v. 35, viii. 34.

**And immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.**—Better, . . . *whither they were going.* It follows from verse 19 that they were at this time about half-way across the lake—*i.e.*, from two to three miles from the shore. No such explanation as that they were near the shore, but in the darkness and confusion of the storm did not know it, is consistent with the plain meaning of these definite words. On the other hand, it is not necessary to suppose that St. John here adds the narrative of another miracle. Where all was miraculous this may well, indeed, have been thought so too; but the analogy of the miracles of our Lord does not lead us to expect the use of divine power to accomplish what was within the reach of human effort. It would on this supposition be difficult to understand why the earlier Gospels omit what would surely have seemed to be among the greatest miracles, and why St. John mentions it only in a passing sentence. The words appear rather to contrast the ease and rapidity with which the second half of the voyage was accomplished in His presence, before which the winds and waves were hushed into a calm, and their fears and doubts passed into courage and hope; with the first half, when the sea kept rising, and a strong wind kept blowing, and they rowed against it for five-and-twenty or thirty furlongs. The word rendered "immediately"—which is more exactly our *straightway*—may find its full meaning in the straight line of the boat's after-course, as contrasted with its being tossed hither and thither during the storm. The whole context seems to find its full meaning in the sense of difficulty and danger before our Lord was received into the boat, and in the sense of safety and peace afterwards. The Psalmist of the English *Christian Year* has expressed this in familiar words—

> "Thou Framer of the light and dark,
> Steer through the tempest Thine own ark;
> Amid the howling wintry sea
> *We are in port if we have Thee.*"

It is scarcely too much to think that the familiar words of him who is Psalmist of Jewish and Christian year alike were present to the mind of St. John—

> "For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind,
> Which lifteth up the waves of (the deep).
> They mount up to the heaven,
> They go down again to the depths:
> Their soul is melted because of trouble.
> . . . . . . .
> He maketh the storm a calm,
> So that the waves thereof are still.
> Then are they glad because they be quiet;
> *So he bringeth them unto their desired haven.*"

(See the whole passage, Ps. cvii. 23—33.)

The miracle is followed in the other accounts by the healings in the land of Genesareth. (See Matt. xiv. 34—36; Mark vi. 53—56.) For St. John the whole leads up to the discourse at Capernaum. He has told how our Lord and the disciples have crossed again to the west of the lake, but the narrative at once returns to the multitude who have seen the sign, and for whom there remains the interpretation.

(22) **The people.**—Better, *the multitude.* It is the same word which in verse 5 is rendered "company."

which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but *that* his disciples were gone away alone; (23) (howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:) (24) when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus. (25) And when they found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither? (26) Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. (27) Labour not[1] for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.[a] (28) Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? (29) Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of

[1] Or, *Work not.*

[a] Matt. 3. 17.

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**On the other side of the sea**—*i.e.*, on the eastern side. The writer's starting-point is now Capernaum. In verse 25 the same words mean the western side, the starting-point of the multitude being the scene of the miracle.

**Save that one whereinto his disciples were entered.**—Better, *save one,* with the best MSS. The addition has arisen from an explanatory gloss.

(23) **Howbeit there came other boats.**—This is a parenthesis to explain the fact that while on the previous evening they saw only one boat, there were now several. The multitude came in part from the west of the lake, and the boats crossed over in the morning for them. It is possible that a harbour or centre of merchandise is pointed out by "nigh unto the place."

**The Lord had given thanks.**—This act had impressed itself upon the writer. Because the Lord had blessed the bread it was that the multitude had whereof to eat.

(24) **When the people.**—Better, *the multitude,* as before. It is not necessary to suppose that the whole 5,000 crossed over. The crowd came probably in part from the eastern side, and many would continue their journey to Jerusalem (comp. verse 2). If indeed we press the words of verse 22, "the multitude which (still) stood on the other side of the sea," they would include the remnant only.

**Therefore saw.**—Resuming verse 22. The sentence is long and involved, and this has been, as we may expect, followed by some variations in the text. "Saw," in verse 22, should be interpreted of the previous evening, and the same word here of the day of their own embarking. They knew there was only one boat, and that the disciples had gone away in it, but Jesus had not. They expected therefore to find Him among themselves, but did not. Meanwhile, other boats had come across from Tiberias. From these they may have learnt that He was not there.

**They also took shipping.**—Better, *they themselves entered into the boats.*

(25) **Rabbi, when camest thou hither?**—This discourse took place in the synagogue at Capernaum (verse 59). They are amazed to find Him here. When and how could He have come? He had not gone in the boat with the disciples, and no other boats had crossed but those in which they themselves came. On the title Rabbi, see Note on chap. i. 38.

(26) Jesus does not answer their question. There is an earlier sign than that about which they now ask, the spiritual significance of which neither they nor the disciples have realised (Mark vi. 52). He does not satisfy their curiosity, but with the solemn "Verily, verily," begins to reveal this hidden truth.

**Not because ye saw the miracles.**—Better, *not because ye saw signs.* There is no article in the original, and the common rendering "miracles" quite misses the sense. They had seen miracles and had felt their force as wonders; what they had not done was to enter into the spiritual significance, and see in them signs of the eternal truth. They regarded the whole matter from without. It was to them nothing more than an eating yesterday, which may be repeated to-day; or it may be He will allow them to take Him and make Him King now, though He did not then.

(27) **Labour not for the meat which perisheth.**—This is one of the instances in which the reader of the English Bible has in the margin a much better rendering than in the text. *Work not* shows the verbal connection with verses 28, 29, 30, which is wholly lost in "labour not." It will be instructive to compare the other passages in this Gospel where the word occurs: chaps. iii. 21 (*wrought* in God); v. 17; ix. 4. *Work not* is better than "work not for," by which the words have been sometimes rendered. The sense is, "Work not out—let it not be the result of your constant working—to have food (comp. chap. iv. 32) which perisheth; but let your work be one worthy of your endeavour, food which endureth unto eternal life, which food the Son of Man will give to you."

**For him hath God the Father sealed.**—The emphasis of the original is seen better by preserving the order of the words, *for Him hath the Father sealed, even God.* (Comp. Note on chap. iii. 33.)

(28) This verse confirms the meaning given to the preceding words. They understand them in that sense. There are works for them to do which are appointed of God. What shall they do that they may work these works? They had seen Him doing mighty works, which clearly showed the power of God. Are there for them works of a like kind? What steps must they take that they too may work them?

(29) **This is the work of God.**—They speak of "works," regarding life as an aggregate of individual deeds. He speaks of "work," regarding separate acts as the outcome of principle. His own works (chap. v. 36) made one complete work (chap. xvii. 4). They had one great work to do, which indeed seemed not a work, but which when realised would be the living principle of every work, and would be as food abiding unto eternal life.

God,[a] that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

(30) They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work? (31) Our fathers did eat manna in the desert;[b] as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.[c] (32) Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. (33) For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. (34) Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. (35) And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. (36) But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me,

[a] 1 John 3. 23.

[b] Ex. 16. 15; Num. 11. 7.

[c] Ps. 78. 25.

**That ye believe on him whom he hath sent.**—Comp. chap. v. 24. To believe on Him whom God hath sent is already to have the spiritual life which is eternal. The contrast of the words comes to us across the discussions of many centuries, speaking to the angry waves which arise in men's souls and bidding them be still. Faith and work, then, are one. As soul and body, they together make one life. The energy of every work is in the faith which links the soul with God; the outcome of all faith is in the act which links the soul with man. The work of life is faith; and "faith worketh by love" (Gal. v. 6).

(30) **What dost thou work?**—They feel that His words are an assertion that He is the Messiah, and they demand of Him Messianic signs and works. Do they demand a sign who had seen the thousands fed, and would then have made Him a king? It was but yesterday that He was obliged to withdraw from the enthusiasm of the multitude. Do they to-day need a further proof? The answer is to be found partly in the fact that a feeling soon quickened is soon cooled, and that even the disciples had not learnt the true meaning of the earlier sign (verse 19); and partly in the fact that He Himself had taught them since, that the work of life was spiritual and eternal, and that He too could give them that food. This seems to them a claim to a power in the world of spirit analogous to that which He had exercised in the world of matter. They demand proof of this power. Where is the sign of it? What is the work that He Himself does answering to the work of faith which He demands from them?

(31) **Our fathers did eat manna.**—He claims to be the Messiah; but the Messiah was to be greater than Moses, and the sign He has shown is less. The Messiah was to cause manna again to fall from heaven, as their Rabbis taught. They had eaten food which, if miraculously multiplied, was still the food of earth—the common bread and common relish—and this on the grassy sward not far removed from the habitations of men. Their fathers had eaten the manna which came direct from God, and was gathered from the granite rocks of the desert; and the Psalmist had told, and Hebrew children loved to chant, that "bread from heaven was that which He gave them to eat."

(32) **Moses gave you not that bread.**—Again His solemn words bring to their thoughts the deeper reality which they are passing over. They had implied a contrast between their fathers and themselves, between Moses and Jesus. They expressed the glory of the Mosaic sign in the language of the Psalm; but there the gift is ascribed to God, and it is named to mark the darkness of their unbelief. The gift of God was ever the same. He it was who gave then; He it is who ever giveth. "You think of Moses; but Moses was the messenger of My Father. You speak of bread from heaven; but heaven is My home, from which I am come to give the true bread to the world, which in very truth is its sustenance." (Comp., for the full sense of "true," the Note on chap. i. 9.)

(33) **He which.**—Better, *that which.* The identification with Himself does not occur before verse 35. This verse is a fuller expression of the last clause of verse 32, to which each term answers.

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|---|---|
| "My Father giveth" . . . . . | "the bread of God." |
| "The (ideally) true bread" . . . . . . | "giveth life unto the world." |
| "From heaven" . . . . . .. | "which cometh down from heaven." |

The tenses are present. (Comp. Notes on verses 50 and 51.) The manna in the wilderness was but one instance of that which is constant. The Jewish nation was but an unit in the Father's family. The bread of God ever cometh and ever giveth life, and the life which it giveth is for the world. Every word proceeding from the mouth of God, spoken in many portions and in many ways, was part of the true food for the true life of man.

(34) **Lord, evermore give us . . . .**—Comp. Note on chap. iv. 15. It would be better to read *Sir* for "Lord" here, as there. They, as the Samaritan woman, think of the satisfaction of physical need. They do not realise that man does not live by bread alone. The manna fell from heaven and gave life to their fathers; He has spoken of bread of God coming in the same way, and giving life. He has given them bread on earth, which they ate yesterday, but they hunger again to-day. Could He give them "evermore this bread?"

(35) **I am the bread of life.**—Comp. again the conversation with the woman of Samaria. Here they have asked for "this bread," the bread which giveth life, as distinct from that which perisheth. It is now present with them. He is that bread, whose characteristic is life. He is the Word of God, revealing God to man, teaching the eternal truths which are the life of the spirit just as bread is of the body.

**He that cometh to me . . . he that believeth on me.**—The natural bread satisfied no need unless it was appropriated and eaten. Prompted by hunger, they had taken into hand and mouth the loaves He had given them, and were filled. The same law holds for the spiritual bread. It is taken by him who comes to Christ; it is eaten by him who believes on Him, and it satisfies every need. It sustains the spiritual life in strength, and refreshes it in weariness. The bread of life giveth a principle of life, and he who hungereth and thirsteth for it shall also be filled, but with that which abideth, so that he shall never hunger and shall never thirst. (Comp. Matt. v. 6.)

(36) **But I said unto you . . .**—There is no record of this saying. It was included in the thoughts of

and believe not. (37) All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. (38) For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. (39) And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. (40) And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I

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chap. v. 37—44, and was perhaps uttered then, or, more probably, to those whom He is now addressing. That there are many words of Christ which have not been preserved to us is certain. (Comp. Notes on chap. xx. 30, 31.) It is possible, but scarcely more than this, that the words refer to what He was about to say.

**Ye also have seen me.**—The "also" is misplaced. It is not "ye in addition to others," but *Ye have even seen Me.* Ye have not simply been told, but have had the fullest evidence, amounting to actual seeing. (Comp. chap. xx. 29.) You asked for a sign, that you may see it and believe (verse 30); you have had much more, and do not believe. (Comp. Note on Luke xvi. 29.)

(37) **All that the Father giveth me.**—There is something startling in this power of the human will to reject the fullest evidence, and to remain unbelieving, after the proof which it has itself demanded as a foundation for its belief. In that assembly there are representatives of the differing stages of faith and non-faith in Him, which every age of Christianity has seen. Here are men in the pride of human wisdom rejecting Him because He does not fulfil their own idea of what the Messiah should be. Here are men of humble heart finding in Him the satisfaction of the soul's deepest wants, and believing and knowing that He is the Holy One of God (verse 69). Here are men of the Nicodemus type, passing from one stage to the other, almost believing, but held back by their will, which willeth not to believe. Here are men, too, of the Judas type (verses 64 and 71), traitors even in the faithful few. For these varying effects there must be a cause, and in the next few verses Jesus dwells upon this. He finds the reason (1) in the eternal will of God, of whose gift it is that man willeth; and (2) in the determination of the will of man, of whose acceptance it is that God giveth. Men have seized now one and now the other of these truths, and have built upon them in separation logical systems of doctrine which are but half-truths. He states them in union. Their reconciliation transcends human reason, but is within the experience of human life. It is, as St. Bernard said, following the words of Jesus, "If there is no free will, there is nothing to save; if there is no free grace, there is nothing wherewith to save;" or, in words more familiar to English ears, ". . . . the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will" (the Tenth Article of Religion).

**And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.**—It is not easy to improve the English rendering of this verse, and there is a sacredness in the sound of the old, old words; but still, they convey to few readers the full meaning of the original. The word "come" is made to serve, within two or three lines, for three different Greek words. Literally, we should read, *All that the Father giveth Me shall arrive at Me, and him that is on the way I will in no wise cast out: for I am come down . . . .* The present tense of "giveth" should be noted. The giving is not of an act in the past, but of a ceaseless love ever in the present. The word "all" is the neuter of the collective whole, thought of without reference to individual action. It is repeated, and still with reference to the gift in verse 39; while in verse 40, with the thought of each man's coming, it passes to the masculine, which marks out the separate life and faith of every unit in the mass.

It may be that the words "come" (*arrive at*) and "cometh" (*is on the way*), contrasted as they are in this verse, refer to the different positions of those who seek Him—to the ninety and nine in the fold, and the one who in the far distance hears His voice and comes in doubt and fear; but the context seems rather to point out the fulfilment of the Messianic kingdom as the Father's gift, and the individual difficulties of, and individual help given to, those who strive to enter it, and shall in no wise be cast out. There were men among those who heard Him who in darkness and difficulty were feeling their way: these men were guided and strengthened by an unseen hand until they found it; there were men there who were being cast out, but not by Him.

(38) **Not to do mine own will.**—Comp. chap. v. 30. He has spoken of the Father's gift and of human action. He now once more identifies His own will with that of the Father, and yet states the fact of His possessing an independent will. It cannot be that He should cast out any one who comes. He knows, indeed, with the knowledge of human nature, how hard it is for men to read the spiritual through the sensuous, and what are the hindrances in the way of every seeker of truth. Added to this, He knows, with a divine knowledge, what is the infinite love of the Father, and He has Himself come down from heaven to fulfil heaven's will in love to man.

(39) **And this is the Father's will.**—Read, with best MSS., *And this is the will of Him that sent Me.* Comp. Note on verse 40. These two verses further set forth the divine will in the mission of Christ, first in relation to the Father's gift, and then in relation to man's acceptance. Both verses make emphatic the expression of that will in the mission, *Him that sent Me;* both refer its fulfilment to the final victory over sin and death, *at the last day.* Both state the will of God in a single clause, prefaced by the most signal proof of divine love in God revealed on earth, and followed by its end, in man raised to heaven.

The "all" is here neuter, referring to the whole extent of the Messianic work. (Comp. verse 37.) Vast as this is, beyond our power of thought, including all times, and all places, and all nations, and it may be other worlds, it is the divine will that nothing should be lost. In the moral, as well as in the physical world, no force can perish.

**Hath given me . . .**—The past tense here, because the gift is thought of in its completion at the last day. (See verse 37.)

(40) **And this is the will of him that sent me.**—Read, *For this is the will of My Father.* (See verse 39.) The common text has inserted the opening words

will raise him up at the last day. (41) The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. (42) And they said, Is not this Jesus,[a] the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? (43) Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. (44) No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. (45) It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God.[b] Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath

[a] Matt. 13. 55.

[b] Isa. 54. 13; Jer. 31. 34.

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of these verses. There can be no doubt that the change indicated gives the original reading, and it will be seen that the relation of "Father" and "Son" is thus preserved.

**Every one which seeth the Son.**—We pass here to the individuals who compose the great mass of humanity. It is the divine will that no one should be excluded, but that he may have eternal life (comp. chaps. iii. 15 and v. 24): this is the Father's gift in the person of the Son. The exercise of the mental power to see Him, the reception of Him and trust upon Him: this is man's acceptance of God's gift. The word rendered "seeth" means to look upon, to contemplate, and is the first step towards a true faith.

The analogy of the previous verse makes it probable that we should render the last clause of this verse, *and that I should raise him up at the last day.* The difference of tenses is important. The believer has now the principle of eternal life, but this is to be his in its fulness when he shall be raised up at the last day. This thought of the final victory is the joyous refrain of these verses (39, 40, 44, 54). The spirit brought into communion with the original source of life becomes life in itself. This life is greater than death, and cannot be holden by it (comp. verse 53).

(41) **The Jews murmured at him.**—Better, *concerning Him,* as in chap. vii. 12, 32. Here, too, it was "among themselves" (verse 43). With the true spirit of objectors, they do not regard what He has since said in explanation, but fasten upon what they do not understand in its most striking form. Perhaps they have not listened to what has followed; indeed, the words imply that they were for some time talking to one another, and interrupting His discourse, and that this led to His answering them. They are the Jewish authorities, representing, and probably in part consisting of, members of the Sanhedrin. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 19.)

(42) **Is not this Jesus?**—Here is something definite. He has spoken of being the Bread of Life, and of the Bread from Heaven. Putting together verses 33, 35, 38, they in effect quote His words. But His natural descent and birth was in its outer facts well known, though all its mysteries were still stored in the mother's heart, and waiting for the human life's completion before they should be revealed. "Jesus Bar-Joseph" would be the name by which He was commonly called; Joseph and Mary had been known, probably, to many in the crowd; attention had now for more than a year been fixed on Him; and the genealogies would have been searched and local inquiries made. All these indications point to an ordinary life in a Galilean village. It is human, and therefore they think it cannot be divine. They can conceive a coming in the clouds of heaven: that would be a miracle and tell of God; but the birth of a child is no miracle! the existence of life itself—and such an existence, and such a life—is no sign! All this they cannot read. "How does He then say, I am come down from heaven?" (Comp. verse 38 and Note on chap. vii. 27.)

(43) He does not meet their difficulty. It does not appear, indeed, that it was expressed to Him. He seeks to silence the interruption which their murmuring *among themselves* has caused, and resumes the discourse broken at verse 40.

(44) **No man can come to me.**—The subject is still the mystery of the varying effects of His revelation on the minds of men. These depend upon their present mental state, which is itself the result of acceptance of, or rejection of, divine influence. The Father which sent Him had, by law, and prophets, and worship, been preparing them. The history of each individual life had been a succession, in every conscious hour, of influences for good or for evil. The mind stood between these, and willed for one or other. He who day by day, with all his light and strength, however little that all might have been, had sought the pure, and true, and good—had sought really to know God—was drawn of God, and he only it was who could now come to Him whom God sent. Others were drawn of evil, because they had submitted themselves to its power. They had chosen darkness, and could not now see the light; they had bound themselves in the silken cords of sin, which had hardened into fetters of iron; they had lost themselves in the labyrinths of what they thought wisdom, and did not recognise the true and living way which was opened for them.

The word "draw" need not perplex us; and all the theories opposed to the width of divine love and influence, and to the freedom of human will and action, which have been built upon it, are at once seen to be without support, when we remember that the only other passage in the New Testament where it occurs in a moral sense is in the declaration: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me" (chap. xii. 32).

(45) **It is written in the prophets . .**—*i.e.,* in the Book of the Prophets. (Comp. Matt. ii. 23; Mark i. 2; Acts vii. 42, and xiii. 40.) The immediate reference is to the LXX. translation of Isa. liv. 13, but the same thought runs through other passages of the prophets, as Jer. xxxi. 34, and Joel iii. 1 *et seq.*

The words bring out the meaning of the Father's drawing referred to in verse 44, and point out the extent of the divine teaching by which "all" are taught, and the personal receptivity and effort by which "every man" hears and learns. The teaching is universal, but it may not be heard, and when heard may not be learnt.

**Every man therefore that hath heard.**—Better, *Every man that hath heard,* omitting "therefore," with the best MSS.

**Cometh unto me.**—This is co-extensive with the previous hearing and learning. They who had listened for God's voice would recognise His. They who had been God's disciples would be His too. (Comp. chap. v. 46.)

learned of the Father, cometh unto me. (46) Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God,[a] he hath seen the Father. (47) Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. (48) I am that bread of life. (49) Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

[a] Matt. 11. 27.

(50) This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. (51) I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever:

And the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. (52) The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us *his* flesh to eat? (53) Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. (54) Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. (55) For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. (56) He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. (57) As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. (58) This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

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(46) But this hearing and learning of the Father was the preparation for, not the substitute for, the fuller revelation in the person of the Son. Once again He declares that "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath been the interpreter." (See Note on chap. i. 18; and comp. chaps. iii. 13 and viii. 38.) Every man, in proportion as he had been taught of God, would feel how little he knew of God, and there would be in him the yearning desire and the trained faculty to see Him who is of God.

(47) **He that believeth.**—This thought gives a new force to what He has said in verse 40. He there declared the Father's will, that every one seeing the Son and believing on Him may have eternal life. No man had ever seen the Father, but the Son was then standing in human form before them, and this will was being accomplished, and for the believer eternal life was not only of the future but of the actual present, "He hath eternal life." (Comp. chaps. iii. 15 and v. 24.)

(48) **I am that bread of life.**—Better, *I am the bread of life.* The words, which seem to them so hard to fathom (verse 41), are only an expression of this truth in the form of their own demand (verse 31). The essence of life is unseen; bread is the visible form which contains and imparts it. The invisible God is the source of eternal life; the human nature of the Son of God is the visible form which contains and imparts this to the souls of men.

(49) **Your fathers . . . and are dead.**—Better, . . . *and died.*—The manna which their fathers ate (verse 31) seemed to them a greater work than this which He has done. Its true relation to Him is shown in the fact that those who ate it afterwards died; whereas He is the true spiritual food for the world, and those who feed upon Him shall not afterwards die. That was manna, special in time and circumstance; this is bread, the true sustenance for all times and all circumstances. That seemed to them to come from heaven, and this from earth; but this outer earth-born form of flesh contains the true life, in the only way in which humanity could receive it. The life itself cometh down from heaven.

(51) **I am the living bread.**—The words are again repeated (comp. verses 35 and 48), but with a new fulness of meaning. He spoke before of bread which was "of life," characterised by life, producing life. He now speaks of this bread as "living," containing the principle of life in itself. (Comp. chaps. iv. 13, 14, v. 26). Once again, too, He answers their demand for bread "from heaven" (verse 31). The lifeless manna fell and lay upon the ground until they gathered it, and passed to corruption if they did not. Each day's supply met the need of each day, but met that only. He is the bread containing life in Himself, coming by His own will and act from heaven, living among men, imparting life to those who eat by coming to and believing on Him, so that it becomes in them a principle of life, too, which cannot die, but shall live for ever.

**And the bread that I will give is my flesh.**—The following words, "which I will give," should be, probably, omitted, and the whole clause should be read —*And the bread that I will give is My flesh for the life of the world.* The words are in every way full of meaning, and the history of their interpretation is a long chapter in the history of Christian doctrine. Their connection with the words used at the institution of the Lord's Supper will be dealt with in *Excursus C: The Sacramental Teaching of St. John's Gospel.* Their meaning for the immediate hearers is to be found in the thoughts which led up to them, and which they would suggest to a spiritually-minded Jew. They are, indeed, to be spiritually interpreted (verse 63), and many, even among the disciples, feel it is a hard saying which they cannot hear (verse 60); but the elements of the interpretation are to be sought in the Jewish mind. They have followed Him after a miracle which multiplied a few common barley loaves and fishes, and made them more than enough for thousands (verses 22—24); He has rebuked the mere bread-seeking spirit, and declared to them the true food (verses 26, 29); they have demanded a sign from heaven like the manna (verses 30, 31); He has answered that the manna was the Father's gift, and that He is the true bread from heaven (verses 32—35); He has shown parenthetically the real ground of their unbelief (verses 36—46), and again returned to the thought of the bread of life which they have murmured at (verses 41, 42), and which He has more fully explained (verses 47—51). He now identifies the bread of which He has spoken with His flesh, and says that He will give that for the life of the world. This form of human flesh is, as bread, the means by which life is conveyed; it is the word by which the Eternal Spirit speaks to the spirit of man. (Comp. chap. i. 14, which is the only other passage in this Gospel, and Luke xxiv. 39, of the resurrection body, which is the only other passage in the New Testament, where the word "flesh" is used of the person of Christ.)

These are the thoughts which have immediately led to these words; but many a chord in the Jewish mind ought to have vibrated to them. The emphatic "I will give," whether it is repeated or not, refers perhaps to the contrast with Moses (verse 32), but certainly to a gift in the future, and, therefore, not to the Incarnation, but to the Crucifixion. The great Teacher, whom many of them had heard, realised that the human form they now looked upon was the "Lamb of God" of Isaiah's prophecy (chap. i. 36, Note). It was now the time of their Paschal Feast (verse 4), when Jewish families were assembling to eat the flesh which told of the deliverance from Egyptian bondage and the birth of the nation's life. Every day of Temple service told of flesh given in sacrifice for sin, and eaten in maintenance of the individual life. His words, uttered at this Passover, and fulfilled at the next, announce a gift of His own flesh as the true Paschal Lamb, as the sacrifice for the sins of the world, and as the sustenance of the true life of mankind.

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(52) **The Jews therefore strove among themselves.**—They have passed beyond the murmuring of verse 41. They understand that He means, though His own words have not yet expressed it, that His flesh is to be eaten, and is thus to supply the principle of life. They contend one with another as to how this can really be.

(53) **Then Jesus said unto them.**—This is hardly strong enough for the original. It is rather, *Jesus therefore said unto them.* The words follow upon those he has heard from them.

Some of them have spoken of eating His flesh. Others may even have pressed this to the *reductio ad horribile.* Eat His flesh! Shall we, then, drink His blood too? In no less than seven passages of the Pentateuch had the eating of blood been forbidden (Gen. ix. 4; Lev. iii. 17; vii. 26, 27; xvii. 10—14; xix. 26; Deut. xii. 16, 23, 24; xv. 23); and we find in later times the strength of the feeling of abhorrence, as in 1 Sam. xiv. 32, and Exek. xxxiii. 25, and in the decree of the first Judæo-Christian Council (Acts xv. 29). In the fullest of these passages (Lev. xvii. 10—14), the prohibition is grounded upon the facts that the blood *is* the physical seat of animal life, and that the blood maketh atonement for the soul. It was the life-element poured out before God instead of the life of the soul that sinned. Such would be the thoughts of those who strove among themselves as to what His words could mean; and to these thoughts He speaks with the "Verily, verily," which ever expresses a spiritual truth that He alone could reveal.

**Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man.**—The words point more definitely than those which have gone before to His death. The blood is spoken of as distinct from the flesh, and in this is involved physical death. The eating the flesh would itself involve, as we have seen above, the thoughts of sacrifice and of sustenance, the removal of the death-penalty attached to sin, and the strength of life sustained by food. But the spiritual truth is fuller and deeper than this; and the true element of life in the soul depends upon such communion with Christ as is expressed by drinking the blood itself: that is, by receiving into the human spirit the atonement represented by it, and with this the very principle of life. They may not receive into the human frame the principle of animal life, but no man really has spiritual life who does not receive into the inmost source of his being the life-principle revealed in the person of Christ. This is to pass through and through his moral frame, like the blood which traverses the body, hidden from sight, but passing from the central heart through artery and vein, bearing life in its course to muscle, and nerve, and tissue. It is to traverse the soul, passing from the Eternal Life and Love, which is the heart of the universe, through the humanity of Christ, and carrying in its course life and energy for every child of man.

**Life in you.**—More exactly, *life in yourselves.* This is more fully expressed in verses 56 and 57.

(54) **Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood.**—The thought advances from the negative to the positive. The previous verse stated the condition without which they could not have life. This verse declares that they who thus eat and drink possess that life now, and that it is eternal. (Comp. Note on verse 47.) The thought advances, too, from the "ye" of those immediately addressed to the "whoso," which has no limit but the fulfilment of the condition. The word for "eateth" is a stronger word than that before used, meaning literally the act of dividing the food by the teeth; but this meaning is not to be pressed. It is simply the present tense, which describes the process of eating, and is the same word which is used in verses 56, 57, 58, and in chap. xiii. 18. The sense of the word in the only other place in the New Testament where it occurs (Matt. xxiv. 38) confirms this.

**And I will raise him up at the last day.**—The thought of the eternal life, which is the present possession of the spirit in communion with God, leads on once again to the fuller expansion of that life in the final victory over death. (Comp. verses 40 and 44.)

(55) **For my flesh is meat indeed.**—Better, *for My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink.* This verse further explains that he who eateth the flesh and drinketh the blood hath eternal life, for he has the true elements of life. It is an answer, too, to the question, How can this Man give us His flesh to eat? (verse 52.)

(56) **Dwelleth in me, and I in him.**—*Abideth* gives the sense more fully. (Comp. chaps. xiv. 2—23; xv. 4 *et seq.*; xvii. 23; 1 John iii. 24; iv. 16.) It is one of those deeper thoughts which meet us only in the words of the beloved disciple. The union which results from the communication of life is not temporary, but is one that remaineth. By virtue of it we abide in Christ, and He in us. It is our home life, that of every day, and will be the life of the eternal home (chap. xiv. 2). (Comp. Note on chap. v. 38, and the contrast in chap. iii. 36.)

(57) **I live by the Father . . . he shall live by me.**—The preposition "by" here is ambiguous, and it is better, therefore, to render the words, *I live by reason of the Father . . . he shall live by reason of Me.* For the thought of the Father as the original source of life, and as giving this principle of life to the Son, comp. Note on chap. v. 25. He that taketh the Son into his own being, in like manner receives this principle of life from Him.

(58) **This is that** (better, *the*) **bread which came down . . .** *i.e.,* of this nature, which He has expounded from verse 32 onwards. The tense is now in the past, pointing to His historic coming, because He has asserted that He is the bread. (Comp. verses 33 and 38.)

**Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead.**—Read, with the best MSS., *not as your fathers did eat, and are dead.*

The discourse ends with that which has been the text of it.

(59) These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. (60) Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? (61) When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? (62) *What* and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?[a] (63) It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life. (64) But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

[a] ch. 3. 13.

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(59) **As he taught in Capernaum.**—If we accept the identification of Capernaum with *Tell-Hûm*, which is in every way probable (comp. Note on Matt. iv. 13), we have good reason for believing that modern discovery has traced out the foundations of the synagogue in which this discourse was spoken. It was a gift to the Jews by a devout Gentile (Luke vii. 5), and as such, of greater architectural beauty than was common among Galilean synagogues. Corinthian capitals and a heavy cornice and frieze are among the ruins, and the traveller's eye may rest to-day on the very ornaments which our Lord's eyes saw there eighteen centuries ago. On one of the lintels of the door he may trace a sculptured pot of manna, and connect with it the thoughts of the manna which the fathers did eat, and died: just as in a Christian church he may trace the emblems of the bread of life, which a man may eat of and not die. A plan and details of the synagogue, with an account by Captain Wilson, R.E., will be found in the *Second Quarterly Statement* of the Palestine Exploration Fund (June, 1869). The same society has published a photograph of the ruins.

(60) **Many therefore of his disciples**—*i.e.*, of the disciples in the wider sense; those who more or less fully were accepting His teaching, and were regarded as His followers. From verse 64, the Apostles would seem to be included in the more general designation. In verse 67 they are separately addressed.

**This is an hard saying; who can hear it?**—*i.e.*, not hard to be understood, but hard to hear, a stumbling-block in the way of their faith. For the word itself, comp. Matt. xxv. 24. His meaning was, indeed, not read by them, but the literal meaning was painfully clear, and one to which they will not listen. (Comp. chap. x. 20.) They do not raise any formal objection to Him, but friends and companions who had talked together of the Teacher and His teaching before, talk again now, and many of them who have followed Him up to this point can follow Him no more.

(61) **When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured.**—The tenses in the original describe the scene in the present: Jesus as *knowing*, the disciples as *murmuring*. The knowledge is in Himself, uninformed by them, and His teaching is addressed to the thoughts of their hearts. They were placing themselves in the position of the Jews (verse 41), and were making the stepping-stone of spiritual knowledge, up which faith would have walked, into a rock of offence over which blindness fell.

(62) **What and if ye shall see . . . ?**—Our version adds the word "what," as will be seen from the italics, but it rightly expresses the sense. Literally, we should read, *If then ye should behold the Son of Man ascending up where He was before?* The Ascension would be the proof of the coming down from heaven (verse 58), which is part of the teaching they cannot now accept. The margin refers to the more formal statement of this in chap. iii. 13. The reader should also compare chap. xx. 17, where the Ascension is again assumed, and Eph. iv. 9, 10. Comments on these incidental references by St. John to an event he does not record have been made too frequently without noting that, in each case, the speaker is Jesus, to whose thoughts this end of subjection to earthly laws, in subjecting them to Himself, was ever present. St. John, in his own narrative, nowhere mentions the fact of the Ascension, nor does he in any way refer to it. That he could write these words without doing so is an assurance of his own knowledge of the glorious sequel of the Resurrection, and of its unquestioned acceptance in the Church.

(63) **It is the spirit that quickeneth.**—The word "quickeneth," though it has almost passed from everyday use, will probably hold its place in theological use, and convey for the most part the true meaning. If it is retained here, it must, however, be noted that it is a compound of the word rendered "life" at the close of the verse. "It is the spirit that giveth life . . . the words . . . are spirit and are life." These words are immediately connected with the thought of the Ascension, which was to precede the gift of the Spirit. (Comp. chaps. vii. 39 and xvi. 7 *et seq.*). We are to find in them, therefore, a deeper meaning than the ordinary one that His teaching is to be, not carnally, but spiritually understood. They think of a physical eating of His flesh, and this offends them; but what if they, who have thought of bread descending from heaven, see His body ascending into heaven? They will know then that He cannot have meant this. And the Descent of the Spirit will follow the Ascension of the Son, and men full of the Holy Spirit will have brought to their remembrance all these words (chap. xiv. 26), and they will then know what the true feeding on Him is, and these very words which He has spoken will carry their lessons to the inmost being, and be realised, not simply in a spiritual sense, but as spirit and as life.

(64) **There are some of you that believe not.**—Later, the word "disciple" became synonymous with the word "believer," but there are those now following Him just as they would follow any Rabbi, and, regarding Him as a merely human teacher, they fall short of the faith which was the first qualification for true discipleship. They had heard, it may be, the Sermon on the Mount, and such teaching as that of Matt. xiii. In part they could understand this, and therefore in part believed; but when faith was really needed, it was found not really to exist: for faith is accepting what is not demonstrable to the mere reason, and seeing what is invisible.

**From the beginning.**—This is a relative term, and is to be interpreted from the context. It means here the beginning of their discipleship. He saw in their hearts the varying kinds of ground on which the good seed fell, and in their acts and words the varying effects.

(65) And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

(66) From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. (67) Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? (68) Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. (69) And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ,[a] the Son of the living God. (70) Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? (71) He spake of Judas Iscariot *the son* of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

[a] Matt. 16. 16.

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There were hearts like the hardened wayside, but it may have been ploughed; like the stony places, but that shelving rock may have been broken through; like the thorns, but they may have been rooted up; and all may have become, as some were, like the good and fruit-bearing ground.

(65) **No man can come unto me.**—Unless the fields had been prepared it was in vain to sow the seed. No effort on the sower's part could make them receptive. The fact that they believed not, declared that their hearts were not prepared, but did not affect the goodness of the seed. This defection did not surprise Him. He had already used words which anticipated it. (Comp. Note on verses 37 and 44.)

It will be observed that this verse follows in the teaching of Christ immediately on the first clause of verse 64, the second clause being a statement of the writer.

(66) **From that time.**—The addition of the word "time" has given a definite and questionable meaning to the Greek, which is indefinite. "From that" probably means on that account, because of the words He had spoken. The actual departure was the result of the teaching, which tested their faith and found it wanting, and was at that time, not gradually from that time onwards. (Comp. Note on chap. xix. 12.)

**Many of his disciples.**—Co-extensive with the same term in verse 60.

(67) **Will ye also go away?**—We have to think of the disciples grouped round Him, the Twelve—now a distinct body, and so well known that St. John names them for the first time without a note—being nearer to Him than the rest, and of these the first four (see Note on Matt. x. 2) the nearest. Many go away from Him. Men He had taught, borne with in all their weakness and darkness, watched as some light seemed to dawn upon them, hoped for, prayed for, lived for, and would die for, turn back. Yes; that heart, too, can feel the bitterness of disappointment. He looks at the Twelve close to Him, and says to them, *Ye also do not wish to go away?* The question expects the answer it receives. There He has hope still.

(68) **Then Simon Peter answered.**—The look may have been directed to Peter, or here, as elsewhere, his natural character makes him spokesman for the Twelve. And striking is his speech. "Go away? To whom? They had left all to follow Him, and find all in Him. The Baptist is not living, and they know no other teacher. Go away? How could it be, when His words are spirit and eternal life?" (verse 63.)

(69) **And we believe and are sure.**—Better, *We have believed and are sure.* (Comp. chap. i. 41, 42.) Go away? The faith which first burned in their hearts has passed into the calm certainty of settled knowledge.

**Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God,** has found its way into this place from the confession of Matt. xvi. 16. The almost certain reading here is, *Thou art the Holy One of God.* They had heard this title ascribed to Him by beings from the spirit world (comp. Note on Mark i. 24), and it has been, perhaps, suggested by the present discourse (verses 32 and 46). Like the title Messiah, or Christ, it marks out the consecration to His work. (Comp. John x. 30; 1 Eph. ii. 20; Rev. iii. 7.) The true reading brings out the successive confessions, which are certainly twice, and probably three times, spoken by Peter. This is the second, coming between that of Matt. xiv. 33 and that of Matt. xvi. 16. (See Notes at these places.)

(70) **One of you is a devil.**—But even the brightness of His hope in them is not uncrossed by a shadow; and this shadow is seen in its fearful darkness by the light of the truth, which, like a flash of inspiration, has come to Peter's heart, and has been spoken in the names of all. No human joy is for the Man of Sorrows unmarred. The very height to which these eleven have risen, through doubt and difficulty, in honest hearts and earnest lives, shows the depth to which one, with like power and capacity, like call and opportunity, had fallen. The order of the words is emphatic in the sadness which asks the question, *Did I not choose you twelve, and of you one is devil?* There was the same choice for all, and the choice made, as it is always made, from their fitness and promise for the work for which all were chosen. And of even twelve, one who was subject for hope then is beyond hope now. There may be mystery connected with this life of Judas which none of us can understand; there are certainly warnings connected with it which none of us can refuse to heed.

**A devil.**—The meaning would be more exactly given, perhaps, if the word were simply rendered *devil,* but this can hardly be expressed in English. See Note on Matt. xvi. 23, and, further on Judas, see Notes on Acts i. 16—25.

(71) **Judas Iscariot the son of Simon.**—The best MSS. read, *Judas, the son of Simon Iscariotes.* On the name see the list of the Apostles in Matt. x. 4. If we accept the most probable interpretation of Iscariot as *Ish K'rīoth,* a man of *K'rīoth,*—and this is supported by the variation of MSS. in this place, some of which read "from Kariotes," and the best of which, as we see, apply the title Iscariot to Simon—then Judas belonged to the tribe of Judah (Josh. xv. 25), and is the only one of the Apostles who was not a Galilean (Acts ii. 25). This connects itself with the antagonistic position of the Jews from Jerusalem.

**That should betray him.**—Not indicating that Judas was then planning the betrayal. (Comp. chap. xiii. 2.) This remark is made by the writer to explain the strong words of the previous verse.

**Being one of the twelve.**—Or, *although he was one of the Twelve,* the exact shade of meaning of the participle being defined by the context. It marks, again, the tragic contrast between what might have been expected and what was actually realised. One of the Twelve, devil! one of the Twelve, the betrayer!

CHAPTER VII. — (1) After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him. (2) Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.[a] (3) His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judæa, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. (4) For *there is* no man *that* doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. (5) For neither did his brethren believe in him. (6) Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready. (7) The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it,

A.D. 32.

[a] Lev. 23. 34.

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VII.

[(2) Jesus is Truth and Light and Love (vii. 1—x. 42).
(*a*) *Jesus is Truth* (chap. vii.).
(α) The Feast of Tabernacles (verses 1—13).
(β) The teaching of Jesus (verses 14—39):
His doctrine is from the Father (verses 15—24).
He is Himself from the Father (verses (25—31);
He will return to the Father (verses 32—39).
(γ) The effect of the teaching. Division among the multitude, and in the Sanhedrin (verses 40—52).]

(1) **After these things . . .**—Denoting not immediate sequence, but covering the interval included in this verse—*i.e.*, the Galilean ministry of Matt. xv.—xviii. (Comp. Note on chap. xxi. 1.) It would have been natural for Him to have gone up to the Passover of that year (chap. vi. 4), but He did not do so on account of the open hostility of the Jews. He continued his sojourn in Galilee.

**Jewry** was frequent in the older English translations, but has been preserved in the Authorised version of the New Testament only here and in Luke xxiii. 5. (See Note there, and comp. Dan. v. 13 and the Prayer Book version of Ps. lxxvi. 1.)

(2) **The Jews' feast of tabernacles.**—This began on "the fifteenth day of the seventh month" (Lev. xxiii. 34), *i.e.*, the 15th of Tishri, which answers to our September. The interval, then, from Passover to Tabernacles is one of about five months. The feast continued for seven days, during which all true Israelites dwelt in booths, in remembrance of their dwelling in tabernacles when they came out of the land of Egypt. Like the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover) and the Feast of Harvest (Pentecost), this Feast of In-gathering was one of the "three times in the year" when every male Jew was required to appear before the Lord God (Ex. xxiii. 14). Josephus speaks of it as the holiest and greatest of the feasts. It was at once a thankful memorial of the national deliverance, and a yearly rejoicing at the close of each succeeding harvest (Deut. xvi. 13—16).

(3) **His brethren . . .**—Comp. Note on Matt. xiii. 55. They are excluded here by their own words from the band of disciples, as they are by St. John's from the believers (verse 5), and inferentially (verse 7) by the words of Christ Himself from the Twelve. (Comp. chap. xv. 18.)

**That thy disciples also may see . . .**—The last time the word "disciples" was used, it was to mark the departure of many from Him (chap. vi. 60, 64). The months which have passed since have been a time of comparative retirement. He did not go to the Passover, where many would have expected to see Him (verse 11), but within the narrowed circle continued His works and words. The prophet hath not honour in His own home, and His brethren, who have seen these works and do not believe, challenge Him to an open demonstration of them. There is another great feast at hand, and His disciples from all parts will be at Jerusalem, where the rulers will test His claims. If He is the Messiah, no conspiracy to kill Him can prevail; and if these works are really divine, let the great body of disciples see them, and amid the joyous feast, and in the royal city, proclaim Him king.

(4) **For there is no man.**—His course of action seems to them to contradict His personal claim. It is opposed, they think, to the common-sense conduct of mankind.

**If thou do these things.**—The emphasis is on *these things*. There is no doubt that He does them; but if the acts themselves are such as they seem to be, and establish the claim which He bases on them, they should be done in Jerusalem, not in the villages of Galilee. They are for the world, and not for the retirement of home.

(5) **For neither did his brethren believe.**—Comp. Note on verse 3. The words do not admit of any other meaning than the obvious one that even His brethren did not at this time believe Him to be the Messiah. That they are found in the very first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles joining with the Apostles, and the women, and Mary, with one accord in prayer (verse 14), is one of the striking instances of the hardened ground of human hearts passing into the fruitful ground receptive of the seed, as the case of Judas at the close of the last chapter is an instance of the opposite. For the immediate cause of the decisive change, see 1 Cor. xv. 7.

(6) **My time is not yet come.**—Comp. Note on chap. ii. 4. Here, as there, He regards the events of life as marked out by divinely-ordered seasons. There is for Him a time for solemnly entering Jerusalem with a throng of pilgrims going up to a feast, and in a few months it will have come; but it has not come yet. It is at the feast of the Paschal Lamb, already set apart, and not with the joyous shouts of harvest-tide.

**Your time is alway ready.**—They may go now as then. Of the nation, their thoughts and feelings are in sympathy with the national feasts. They can join in the festive throng keeping holiday, and take their part in the Temple service. For Him present events have another meaning. Desertion of disciples, threatenings of Jews, unbelief of brethren—all this means that the end is approaching, and that His time is at hand.

(7) **The world cannot hate you.**—Because they were of the world. To have hated them, would have been to have hated itself. (Comp. chap. iii. 19, 20.)

**But me it hateth, because I testify . . .**—He had placed Himself in a position of antagonism to it, and must necessarily do so. His words and acts must that the works thereof are evil. (8) Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come.[a] (9) When he had said these words unto them, he abode *still* in Galilee.

(10) But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. (11) Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he? (12) And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people. (13) Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.

(14) Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. (15) And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters,[1]

[a] ch. 8. 20.

[1] Or, *learning.*

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be a witness against the evil of its deeds. This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. But men who love darkness must also hate light. Its very presence makes the darkness visible; and nothing cuts to the very quick, like that which makes the heart condemn itself.

(8) **Go ye up unto this feast.**—This should be, rather, *Go ye up unto the feast,* with the stress on the pronoun "ye," and the article instead of the demonstrative "this."

**I go not up yet unto this feast.**—The "yet" is of doubtful authority, though it is found in some early MSS. and versions, and the more so because it removes an apparent difficulty. Without it, the words do not involve a change of purpose, and Porphyry's often-repeated charge of fickleness has no real ground. He is not going up unto the feast in the sense in which they intended—openly, with the usual caravan from Galilee. Another going up publicly, as they intended, and with an issue the dark presages of which now crowd upon Him, is present to His mind. "Ye, go ye up to the feast; *I* go not up to *this* feast." The verb is in the present, and its meaning does not exclude a going up afterwards. (See also Note on verse 10.) They were then going; the caravan was preparing to start. I am not going up (now). The time is coming, but it has not yet fully come. (Comp. Note on Luke ix. 51.)

(9) **He abode still in Galilee.**—We find Him in Jerusalem between the 16th and 20th of Tishri (verse 14), and He could not therefore have remained behind them more than three or four days. We have no record of any companion with Him until chap. ix. 2; but it is probable that some at least of the Apostolic band remained with Him in Galilee and went with Him to Jerusalem. (Comp. Note on Luke ix. 51.) If John returned to Jerusalem after the discourse at Capernaum (comp. *Introduction*), we have an explanation of the brevity with which he treats the period between Passover and Tabernacles.

(10) **But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast.**—The words "unto the feast" are misplaced in the Received text, upon which our version is based. The right reading is, *But when His brethren were gone up unto the feast, then went He also up;* and the difference is not unimportant. We have seen that, even with the ordinary reading, there is no ground for the frequent objection (verse 8), but it is really nowhere said that He went up to the feast at all. As a matter of fact, the special feast day—the day of Holy Convocation—was on the 15th of Tishri, the 14th being the preparation day. From the 16th to the 20th was what was called "The Lesser Festival," or "The Middle of the Feast" (verse 14), and it is at this we find Him present. (Comp. also verse 37.)

**Not openly, but as it were in secret**—*i.e.,* not with the usual company. Judging from His practice at another time (chap. iv. 4), He would go through Samaria, while the caravan would go on the Eastern side of the Jordan.

(11) **The Jews**—*i.e.,* as before, and as in verses 13 and 15, the official representatives of the nation. They kept seeking Him at the feast, where they naturally expected that He would be, and kept asking, without naming Him, Where is He? which is almost equivalent to Where is this fellow? Their question points out that their hostility had gone as far as a definite plot against Him, and that the knowledge of this was widely spread.

(12) **And there was much murmuring among the people.**—The original word for "people" is here, and here only in St. John, in the plural, and is best rendered by *multitudes.* It refers to the throngs of people assembled during the various parts of the ritual of the feast, and, perhaps, specially on the one hand to the Galilean multitude, some of whom had been present at the last great work recorded in this Gospel, and some of whom had been present at other works, and influenced by other teaching of Jesus and the Apostles; and on the other hand, to the Judæan multitude, who had been prevented from accepting Him in the same degree by the stronger influence of the hierarchy. Among these multitudes there arose, as before among the Jews and among the disciples (chap. vi. 41 and 61), a murmuring; but the subject of this discussion is not His teaching, but His character. Their practical test-question was, Is He a good man, or a deceiver? (Comp. Matt. xxvii. 63.) Some would think of deeds and words which established His goodness beyond all doubt; but if He is a good man, then His claim cannot be false. Others would think of deceivers, who had led away the multitude before (comp. Notes on Acts v. 36, 37), and that He was one of them.

(13) **No man** cannot fairly be limited, as it generally has been, to the multitude who believed in Him. It discloses to us rather a reign of terror, in which opinion was stifled, and men dared not speak openly on either side until authority had determined what they should say.

(14) **Now about the midst of the feast.**—Better, *But now, when it was the middle of the feast.* (Comp. verse 8.) This was the technical *Chōl Mō'ēd* or *Mō'ēd Katōn,* "the Middle of the Feast," or "the Lesser Feast." He had taken no part in the greater festival itself, and now He appears in the Temple, as far as we know, for the first time as a public teacher, probably (verse 19) as an expounder of some Scripture which had been read.

(15) **How knoweth this man letters?**—Their spirit is seen in that at which they marvel. It is not the substance of His teaching that excites their attention, but the fact that He who has never been technically trained as a Rabbi is acquainted with the literature of the schools. (See Acts xxvi. 24, "much learning,"

having never learned? (16) Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. (17) If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself. (18) He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him. (19) Did not Moses give you the law,[a] and *yet* none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?[b] (20) The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee? (21) Jesus answered and said unto them, I have

[a] Ex. 24. 3.

[b] ch. 5. 18.

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where "learning" represents the word here rendered "letters.") He is to them as a layman and unlearned (comp. Note on Acts iv. 13), not known in the circles of the professional expounders—a demagogue, who deceived the multitude; and they hear Him speaking with a learning and wisdom that excites their wonder, and unlocking mysteries of which they thought that they only possessed the key.

(16) **My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.**—The answer carries them once more to the words uttered by Him at the last feast at which He had been present. (Comp. chap. v. 19, 30.) Then He had again and again referred to the Father who sent Him (verses 38, 39, 44, 57), and claimed as His own work the doing of the Father's will (verse 30). In the Capernaum synagogue, in the hearing of some of these Jews, He had declared that all who were taught of God, and heard and learned the lesson, would come to Him (chap. vi. 45). There is, then, no ground for their present wonder. The teaching which is His in relation to them, is not His of original source. He claims to be in His humanity as a messenger, carrying the message of Him that sent Him. He is the Word by whom the mind of God is spoken.

**Doctrine** represents a word which is frequently used in the Gospels, of our Lord, but only here and in the next verse by Him. It has acquired a definite and concrete meaning not found in the original, which is better rendered by *teaching* (comp., *e.g.*, Mark iv. 2).

(17) **If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine.**—Better, *If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching.* The stress is upon "willeth," which in our version reads as if it were only the auxiliary verb. It is not deed, which is the outcome of faith; but will, which precedes it, that is here spoken of. This human will to do the divine will is the condition of knowing it. The words are unlimited and far-reaching in their meaning. Those who heard them would naturally understand them, as it was intended they should, of the divine will expressed in the Law and the Prophets (verse 19), but they include the will of God revealed, more or less clearly, to all men and in all times. Our thoughts dwell naturally on representative lives, such as those of Saul the Pharisee, Cornelius the centurion, Justin the philosopher; but the truth holds good for every honest heart in every walk of life. The "any man" of Christ's own words excludes none from its reach, and the voice of comfort and of hope is spoken alike to all in our ignorance, fears, doubts—that he who in very deed willeth to do God's will, shall not fail to know, now or in the life to come, of the teaching whether it be of God. (Comp. Notes on chaps. v. 44 *et seq.*, and vi. 29 and 45.)

(18) **He that speaketh of himself.**—Again the words repeat the thoughts of the earlier discourse. (See Notes on chap. v. 41—44.) They contrast His position and that of His hearers. Professional teachers, they sought glory one from another, and regarded their teaching as of themselves, the special honour of their caste. In the pride of their own knowledge they willed not the glory of God, and so had not the faculty to know and receive His teaching. He sought the will of Him that sent Him, and therefore was true, in harmony with the eternal will of God. The effect of the submission of His will to the Father's, and His seeking in word and work the Father's glory, was that there was no possibility of unrighteousness in Him. This emphasis laid upon truth and righteousness has reference to the charges which they are plotting against Him, and which have already been expressed in the murmuring of the multitude (verse 12). The words are clearly to be explained with special reference to their position and His, but the general form of the expressions, "He that speaketh of himself . . ." "He that seeketh His glory . . ." show that this is not the exclusive reference. They, too, hold good of every man who speaketh of himself, and of every man who seeketh the glory of Him that sent Him.

(19) **Did not Moses . . . ?**—The note of interrogation should be placed at the end of the first clause. The verse would then read, *Did not Moses give you the Law? and none of you doeth the Law. Why seek ye to kill Me?* So far from the will to do God's will, without which they could not know His teaching, they had the Law, which they all professed to accept, and yet no one kept it (chap. v. 45—47). This thought follows naturally on verses 17 and 18, and, like the whole of this teaching, grows out of the truths of chap. v.; but it may be that this reference to Moses and the Law has a special fitness, as suggested by the feast. Moses had commanded that the Law should be read in every Sabbatical year at this very festival (Deut. xxxi. 10); and there is good reason for believing that the current year was a Sabbatical year. The first portion of the Law which it was customary to read was Deut. i. 1—vi. 3. Within this section (verse 17) came the command, "Thou shalt not kill." They were, then, in their persecution of Him (chap. v. 18), breaking the Law, of which their presence at the feast was a professed obedience.

(20) **The people.**—They know that the rulers have sought for Him (verse 11), but are not aware of their intention to kill Him. When this is referred to, it is "by some of them of Jerusalem" (verse 25). These pilgrims know how far from their own thoughts is any such idea, and they think that its presence in His thoughts must be the work of a demon. (Comp. Note on Matt. xi. 18.) They utter this, not in hostility, but in wonder that He can think so.

(21) **I have done one work**—*i.e.*, the one conspicuous work of healing the infirm man on the Sabbath day, which He did at His last visit to Jerusalem. We have already had a reference to other works in chap. ii. 23, and He Himself refers to His many good works in chap. x. 23.

**Ye all marvel.**—This answer is addressed to the multitude who said "Thou hast a devil," when He spoke of the intention to kill Him. This work on the done one work, and ye all marvel. (22) Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision;[a] (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;[b]) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man. (23) If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken;[1] are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day? (24) Judge not according to the appearance,[c] but judge righteous judgment. (25) Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? (26) But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? (27) Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is. (28) Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know

[a] Lev. 12. 3.

[b] Gen. 17. 10.

[1] Or, *without breaking the law of Moses.*

[c] Deut. 1. 16.

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Sabbath day, which provoked the deadly hostility of the hierarchy (chap. v. 16, 18), was cause of wonder to them all. They, too, though not in the same degree, were led by it to take a hostile position.

(22) **Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision.**—Some MSS., and many editors, place the "therefore," or, *on this account*, at the close of the last verse, reading, "Ye all marvel on this account," and then the present verse, "Moses gave unto you circumcision . . ." The reading of our version is, however, better supported, and agrees better with the writer's style. "On this account hath Moses given you circumcision, not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers." The argument is, "Ye circumcise on the Sabbath day because circumcision is part of the Mosaic law; but Moses gave you circumcision because he had an anterior and higher authority for it, and in practice you recognise this and make it override the Sabbath. But if circumcision is allowed, why not a deed of mercy? This is the practice and precept of your rulers. But if a patriarchal rite is greater than the Mosaic Sabbath, because the fathers were anterior to Moses, how much more an act of love, which is anterior to all time."

**A man.**—Used here, and in the next verse, as equivalent to a male child, as in chap. xvi. 21.

(23) **That the law of Moses should not be broken.**—The text here is to be preferred to the marginal reading, though the latter has still the support of considerable authority. In the one case, the law which may not be broken is the law directing circumcision on the eighth day. In the other, "without breaking the law of Moses," refers to the law of the Sabbath. The rule of circumcision on the eighth day (Gen. xvii. 12, xxi. 4) was adopted in the Mosaic law (Lev. xii. 3), and strictly adhered to — we have examples in the New Testament, in Luke i. 59, ii. 21, and Phil. iii. 5—and if the eighth day fell on the Sabbath, then, according to Rabbinic precept, "circumcision vacated the Sabbath." The school of Hillel the Great—and disciples of this school were at the time of our Lord the chief teachers at Jerusalem (comp. Note on v. 39)—gave as a reason for this that the "Sabbath Law was one of the Negative and the Circumcision Law one of the Positive Precepts, and that the Positive destroys the Negative." His appeal, then, is an example of His knowledge of their technical law, at which they wondered in verse 15. Indeed, the argument itself is an example of Hillel's first great law of interpretation—"that the Major may be inferred from the Minor." If circumcision be lawful on the Sabbath, much more is it lawful to restore the whole man. For other instances in which our Lord used this famous Canon of Interpretation, comp. Matt. vii. 11 and x. 29—31.

(24) **Judge not according to the appearance.**—He has put the case before them in its true light, and from their own point of view. There was another Positive Precept of Moses which these judges were forgetting, though it, too, formed part of the first section of the Law read at Tabernacles (Deut. i. 16, 17). (Comp. Note on verse 19.) Let them who profess to judge Him by the Law obey it, and form a just and honest opinion, and not be biassed by the appearance of a mere technicality. Even if His work did fall under the condemnation of what they held to be the letter of the Mosaic law (comp. Note on chap. v. 10), they knew perfectly well—and their own practice as to circumcision proved this—that it did so in appearance only.

(25) **Then said some of them of Jerusalem.**—These Jerusalemites are distinct from the multitude of verse 20, and are acquainted with the intention which seemed so impossible to the latter.

(26) But they, too, have reason for wonder. They hear Him speaking openly, and those who sought His death listen to Him without reply. Are they, then, convinced of the truth of His claim?

**Do the rulers know indeed . . . ?**—Read, *Have the rulers come to know indeed that this Man is the Christ?* The word "very" is omitted by the best MSS. The word "indeed" shows that the questioners think it impossible that the rulers can have recognised Him.

(27) **Howbeit we know this man.**—They at once supply a corrective answer to their own question. They know this Man whence He is. He is the carpenter's son, and His mother, and brethren, and sisters, are well known (Matt. xiii. 55, 56). His brothers, indeed, are part of that multitude (verse 10). They know that the Messiah will be of the seed and town of David (verse 42); but they have no knowledge of an earthly home and earthly relations, and all their ideas are of a Being who will not be subject to the ordinary conditions of life, and whose immediate origin no man can know. God's Anointed living among them as a man, with mother, and brothers, and sisters! This cannot be. What meant the coming in the clouds of heaven of Daniel's vision (Dan. vii. 13), or the coming suddenly to the Temple of Malachi's prophecy? (Mal. iii. 1.) Why did Isaiah tell of His being "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace?" (Isa. ix. 6.) In such thoughts they fulfilled another prophecy of the same Isaiah, which their own Rabbis interpreted of the Messiah, "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him" (Isa. liii. 2).

(28) **Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught.**—The word rendered "cried," implies always an elevation of voice answering to the intensity of the speaker's feeling. (Comp. in this Gospel chaps. i. 15, vii. 37, xii. 44.) Here this feeling has been roused by

whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. (29) But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me. (30) Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come. (31) And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this *man* hath done?

(32) The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him. (33) Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a

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another instance of their misapprehension, because they think of the outward appearance only, and therefore do not grasp the inner truth. They know whence He is; they had been taught that no man should know the Messiah's origin, and therefore they think He is not the Christ. And this technical reason, the meaning of which they have never fathomed, is enough to stifle every growing conviction, and to annul the force of all His words and all His works! St. John is impressed with the fact that it was in the very Temple itself, in the presence of the priests and rulers, in the act of public teaching, that He uttered these words, and he again notices this, though he has told us so before (verses 14 and 26).

**Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am.**—He takes up their objection in order to refute it. There is, indeed, a sense in which it is true. Those features were well known alike to friend and foe. With minds glowing with the fire of love or of hate, they had gazed upon Him as He walked or taught, and His form had fixed itself on the memory. They knew about His earthly home and early life (verse 27), but all this was far short of the real knowledge of Him. It is but little that the events of the outer life tell of the true life and being even of a brother man. Little does a man know even his bosom friend; how infinitely far were they, with minds which did not even approach the true method of knowledge, from knowing Him whom no mind can fully comprehend!

**And I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true.**—Once again He asserts that He claims no position of independence. He is the first great Apostle (comp. Heb. iii. 1), but He is not self-commissioned. Had He not been the Christ, their objection that they knew His origin might have had force. But sent by Him who is the really existent One, and whom they knew not, His origin is unknown to them, and their technical test is fulfilled. In the fullest sense, they neither knew Him nor from whence He came.

For the meaning of the word "true," see Note on chap. i. 9. It is almost impossible to give the sense of the original except in a paraphrase. We must keep, therefore, the ordinary rendering, but bear in mind that it does not mean, "He that sent Me is truthful," but "He that sent Me is the ideally true One." "You talk of person, and of origin, of knowing Me, and from whence I came, but all this is knowledge of the senses, and in the region of the phenomenal world. Being is only truly known in relation to the Eternal Being. He that sent Me to manifest His Being in the world is the truly existent One. In Him is My true origin, and Him *ye* know not."

(29) **But I know him.**—In contrast with their ignorance is His own full knowledge, which belonged to One only. (See Note on chap. i. 18.) The pronoun "I" here, as "ye" immediately before, is emphatic.

**For I am from him, and he hath sent me.**—This knowledge is here based upon His oneness of essence, and upon His true mission. He knows God because He is from Him, and in union ever one with Him. He knows God because He is in His human nature the representative of the Divine to mankind.

(30) **Then they sought to take him.**—The tense is imperfect, marking the continuance of a series of efforts to take Him. The persons who thus sought to take Him are, of course, the members of the Sanhedrin. The people are mentioned in contrast in the next verse. For the present their efforts are confined to plots. No one attempts to use actual force.

**His hour was not yet come.**—This is the writer's explanation of the fact that they did not seek to take Him. Jesus had Himself used these words at the first sign at Cana of Galilee (chap. ii. 4), and again before going up to this very festival (verse 6). The beloved disciple has learnt the religious interpretation of history. That the hour was not yet come, was not the immediate cause which influenced those who desired, but dared not, to lay hands upon Him. The next verse points out that there was a division in the multitude (comp. verses 43 and 44), and in the uncertainty of what the consequences may be, no one was bold enough to take the decisive step. But if not the immediate cause, the writer regards it as the primary cause. Looking back on the life of his Lord, from the old age of his own life, so full of eventful issues, he has learnt that every deed of that life, as every deed of every life, had its hour mapped out in the eternal counsels of God.

(31) **And many of the people believed on him.**—This verse shows an advance in their faith. In verse 12 we found "some" asserting that "He is a good man." Now "many" accept Him as the Messiah, for this is the force of the words, "believed in Him." (Comp. verse 5, and Note there.)

**When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?**—They believe that the Christ has come, but express the common thought of Messianic miracles in a question which must have a negative answer. The Messiah who is expected is not expected to do greater miracles than these. The Messianic idea is therefore fulfilled, and He who has fulfilled it must be the very Christ.

(32) **The Pharisees heard that the people murmured.**—Or, more exactly, *the Pharisees heard the multitude murmuring.* In the second clause of the verse, the Authorised version follows the order of the Received text, but almost all the better MSS. read, "the chief priests and the Pharisees." We have to think of the Pharisees as taking the first steps. They see that faith in Him is spreading among the multitude, and that there is no time to be lost. They hastily call together the Sanhedrin, and the chief priests, who were for the most part Sadducees, join with them in an official resolve to take Him by force.

(33) **Then said Jesus unto them.**—It should rather be, *Therefore said Jesus.* He said this because they sent to take Him. The better MSS. omit "unto

little while am I with you, and *then* I go unto him that sent me. (34) Ye shall seek me,[a] and shall not find *me:* and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come. (35) Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles,[1] and teach

[a] ch. 13. 33.

[1] Or, *Greeks.*

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them," and it is clear, from verse 35, that the words are addressed to the hierarchy generally.

**Yet a little while am I with you.**—Their action is the first attempt to take Him by force. It brings to His mind the thought that the end is at hand. But a little while more, and the hour will have come. The manifestation of God's love to man will then be completed in its crowning sacrifice, and when the work of His mission is completed, He will return to Him that sent Him.

(34) **Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me.**—These words are to be interpreted in connection with chap. viii. 21, where they are repeated, and with chap. xiii. 33, where they are quoted and applied to the disciples. This will exclude any special reference, such as to the destruction of Jerusalem and to the seeking Him in the miseries which should follow, which most expositors have found here. The words refer rather to the more general truth now present to His mind, and applicable to all alike, that the time was at hand when He would return to the Father, and His bodily presence would be unapproachable, alike by those who should seek in hatred, or those who should seek in love.

(35) **Whither will he go that we shall not find him?**—He had said in verse 33, "I go unto Him that sent Me," and in verse 28 He had declared that they knew not Him that sent Him. There is, then, no contradiction between these verses, and their question, strange as it seems, is but another instance of their total want of power to read any meaning which does not lie upon the surface. He is going away, and they will not be able to find Him, and they can only think of distant lands where other Jews had gone, as of Babylon, or of Egypt, or of Greece. Will He join some distant colony of Jews where they cannot follow Him? They have no thought of His death and return to His Father's home.

**Will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?**—Better, *Will He go unto the dispersion among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?* The word for "dispersion" (*διασπορά, diaspora*) occurs again, in the New Testament, only in the opening verses of the Epistle of St. James and of the First Epistle of St. Peter, and is in both these passages represented by the English word "scattered." The only other instance of its occurrence in the Bible, is in the Greek version (LXX.) of Ps. cxlvi. 2. (In Authorised version, cxlvii. 2, "He gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.") It is also found in 2 Macc. i. 27, "Gather those together that are scattered from us." (Comp. Jos. *Wars*, vii. 3, § 3; *Ant.* xii. 1—3; xv. 3, § 1.) The abstract word is used like "the circumcision," *e.g.*, as a comprehensive title for the individuals included in it. These were the Jews who did not dwell within the limits of the Holy Land, but spreading from the three chief centres, Babylonia, Egypt, and Syria, were found in every part of the civilised world. The Babylonian Diaspora owed its origin to the vast number of exiles who preferred to remain in the positions they had acquired for themselves in their new homes, and did not return to Palestine after the Captivity. They were by far the greater part of the nation, and were scattered through the whole extent of the Persian empire. Of the origin of the Egyptian Diaspora, we find traces in the Old Testament, as in Jer. xli. 17, and xlii. 18. Their numbers were greatly increased under Alexander the Great and his successors, so that they extended over the whole country (Jos. *Ant.* xvi. 7, § 2). Much less numerous than their brethren of Babylonia, and regarded as less pure in descent, they have, through their contact with Western thought and the Greek language, left a deeper and wider influence on after ages. To them we owe the LXX. translation of the Old Testament Scriptures, and the Alexandrian school of Jewish philosophers, two of the most important influences which first prepared the way for, and afterwards moulded the forms of, Christianity. The Syrian Diaspora is traced by Josephus (*Ant.* vii. 3, § 1) to the conquests of Seleucus Nicator (B.C. 300). Under the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, they spread over a wider area, including the whole of Asia Minor, and thence to the islands and mainland of Greece. It was less numerous than either that of Babylonia or that of Egypt, but the synagogues of this Diaspora formed the connecting-links between the older and the newer revelation, and were the first buildings in which Jesus was preached as the Messiah.

But though thus scattered abroad, the Jews of the Diaspora regarded Jerusalem as the common religious centre, and maintained a close communion with the spiritual authorities who dwelt there. They sent liberal offerings to the Temple, and were represented by numerous synagogues in the city, and flocked in large numbers to the chief festivals. (Comp. Notes on Acts ii. 9—11.) The Diaspora, then, was a network of Judaism, spreading to every place of intellectual or commercial importance, and linking it to Jerusalem, and a means by which the teaching of the Old Testament was made familiarly known, even in the cities of the Gentiles. "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day" (Acts xv. 21).

Such was the dispersion among the Gentiles of which these rulers of the Jews speak. They ask the question in evident scorn. "Will this Rabbi, leaving Jerusalem, the centre of light and learning, go to those who dwell among the heathen, and become a teacher of the very heathen themselves?" We feel that there is some fact which gives point to their question, and is not apparent in the narrative. We shall find this, it may be, if we remember that He Himself had before this crossed the limits of the Holy Land, and had given words to teach and power to save, in the case of the Greek woman who was a Syro-Phœnician by nation. (Comp. Notes on Matt. xv. 21—28; Mark vii. 24—30.) More fully still do the words find their interpretation in the after history. They are, like the words of Caiaphas (chap. xi. 49—51), an unconscious prophecy, and may be taken as summing up in one sentence the method of procedure in the earliest mission-work of the church. The great high-roads of the Diaspora were those which the Apostles followed. Every apostolic church of the Gentiles may be said to have grown out of a synagogue of the Jews. There is a striking instance of the irony of history, in the fact that the very words of these Jews of Palestine are recorded in the Greek language, by a Jew of Palestine, presiding over a Christian church, in a Gentile city.

For "Gentiles," the margin reads "Greeks," and the Gentiles? (36) What *manner of* saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find *me:* and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come? (37) In the last day,[a] that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. (38) He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said,[b] out of his belly shall flow

[a] Lev. 23. 36.
[b] Deut. 18. 15.

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this is the more exact translation, but the almost constant New Testament use of the word is in distinction from Jews, and our translators felt rightly that this is better conveyed to the reader by the word "Gentiles." (Comp. Notes on Mark vii. 26 and Acts xi. 20.) We must be careful to avoid the not unfrequent mistake of rendering the word as though it were "Hellenist," which means a Græcised Jew. This is to miss the point of their scorn, which is in the idea of His teaching those outside the pale of Judaism.

(36) **What manner of saying is this . . .?**—We get a better sense by omitting the words in italics, and reading, "What saying is this . . . ?" Their scorn does not solve their difficulty, and gives place to wonder. They feel His words cannot mean what they have said. "What, then, do they mean? What is the force of His saying?"

(37) **In the last day, that great day of the feast.**—The question whether the seventh or the eighth day of the feast is intended here, is one of antiquarian rather than of practical interest. The words commanding the observance in Deut. xvi. 13, and Num. xxix. 12, mention only seven days; but this latter passage is followed in verse 35 by a reference to the solemn assembly on the eighth day. With this agree the words in Lev. xxiii. 35, 36, 39, and Neh. viii. 18. Later the eight days of the festival are certainly spoken of as in the Talmud, in 2 Macc. x. 6, and Jos. *Ant.* iii. 10, § 4. The best modern authorities are for the most part agreed that it was the eighth day, *i.e.*, the 22nd of Tishri, that is here referred to. It was the "great day" as the octave of the feast, and the day of holy convocation.

**Jesus stood and cried.**—Comp. Note on verse 28. Here the vivid remembrance of the writer remembers the attitude as well as the voice.

**If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.**—These words were almost certainly suggested by part of the ritual of the festival, which consisted in a solemn procession with music, and headed by a priest, which went on each morning from the Temple to the pool of Siloam, where the priest filled a golden vase with water and carried it to the Temple amid the joyful cries of the people. He then poured it out on the western side of the altar of burnt-offering; while another priest poured a drink-offering of wine, at the same time, on the eastern side of the altar, and the people during this act chanted the words of "the Hallel," Pss. cxiii.—cxviii. If we accept the eighth day as that referred to in this verse, then this ceremony was not repeated; but its very absence may have suggested the fuller declaration of the reality of which it was the representation. The current Rabbinical interpretation of the symbolism connected it with the gift of the latter rain, which was at this season; and also with the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Talmud says expressly, "Therefore is its name called the house of drawing, because from thence is drawn the Holy Spirit," as it is said, "with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (*Jer. Succa*, v. 1). Thoughts like these would be connected with this ritual by the Jews and by Jesus Himself, and the exact form which His own thought takes is marked by the words, "If any man thirst." He stands there on the great day of the feast, and around Him are men who for seven successive mornings have witnessed acts and uttered words telling, though they know it not, of the true satisfaction of spiritual thirst, and thinking of the descent of showers on the thirsty ground, and in some vague way of the Holy Spirit's presence. They are as the woman of Samaria was by the side of the true well. For every one who really knew his need, the source of living water was at hand. (Comp. Notes on chap. iv. 7—15.) That very Feast of Tabernacles, with its dwelling in tents, moreover, brought vividly to their minds the wilderness-life; and as in the past chapter the manna has formed the basis of His teaching about the Bread of Life, so here the striking of the rock and the streams gushing forth in the desert would be present to their minds. In the interpretation of one who was himself a Pharisee, and was taught in the schools of Jerusalem, "that rock was Christ" (1 Cor. x. 4).

(38) There can be little doubt that our English version rightly gives the meaning of the original here; though representatives of both the earliest and the latest schools of interpretation have tried so to read the verse as to avoid its difficulties. Some would attach the first clause to the preceding verse, reading, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me; and let him that believeth on Me drink." Others would have us think that the words, "as the Scripture hath said," belong to the clause before them, and not to that which follows, making the sense, "He that believeth on Me according to the Scriptures, out of his belly (I say) shall flow rivers of living water." The reader of the English will, it is believed, feel, and the reader of the Greek will feel still more strongly, that these are attempts to avoid what it is hard to explain, and that while they miss the difficulty they also miss the meaning.

**He that believeth on me . . .**—We have here an advance on the thought, "If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink." That represented the satisfaction of the individual mind. This teaches the fuller truth that every one in living communion with Christ becomes himself the centre of spiritual influence. There is in him a power of life which, when quickened by faith, flows forth as a river, carrying life and refreshment to others. No spirit grasps a great truth which satisfies its own yearnings as the waters of the fountain slake physical thirst, without longing to send it forth to others who are seeking what he himself had sought. There is in him a river whose waters no barrier can confine. This is the spirit of the prophet and the evangelist, of the martyr and the missionary. It is the spirit of every great teacher. It is the link which binds men together and makes the life of every Christian approach the life of Christ, for he lives not for himself but for the world.

The exact words "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water," are not found in any part of the Canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament, and yet Christ Himself utters them with the formula of quotation. This will be a difficulty only to those who value letter and syllable above spirit and substance. It may be that the words which our Lord actually rivers of living water. (39) (But this spake he of the Spirit,[a] which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given;* because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

(40) Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. (41) Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? (42) Hath not the scripture said,[b] That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? (43) So there was a division among the people because of him. (44) And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

(45) Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought

[b] Matt. 2. 5.

[a] Isa. 44. 3; Joel 2. 28.

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uttered in the current language of Jerusalem were nearer to the very words of some passage in the Old Testament than they seem to be in the Greek form in which St. John has preserved them to us. But it is instructive that the thought is that which our Lord Himself, or St. John as representing Him, considers as the essence of the quotation. The thought meets us again and again in the Old Testament. See the following passages: Ex. xvii. 6; Num. xx. 11; Ps. cxiv. 8; Isa. xliv. 3; lv. 1; lviii. 11; Joel iii. 1, 23; Ezek. xlvii. 1, 12; Zech. xiii. 1; xiv. 8.

This frequent reference to the refreshment and life-giving power of water is the more natural in the East, where drought is a fearful evil ever to be guarded against, and a well of water a blessing always sought for as the first necessity of life.

The abundance is suggested by the contrast between the small quantity poured out in the Temple and the streams which flowed from the rock struck in the wilderness. The vessel they carried contained but three logs, or about a quart, of water, brought from the tank of Siloam. This was poured through a perforated silver bowl. In the spiritual interpretation the water shall not be carried to the Temple, for every believer shall be a temple of the Holy Ghost and a source of life; it shall not be a limited quantity in vessels of gold and silver, but shall be as rivers bursting forth in their strength and fulness.

(39) The word "given" is omitted in nearly all MSS. except the Vatican. "Holy" before Ghost is also probably an insertion, though it is found in some of the oldest MSS. and versions. These are additions of copyists who were anxious to preserve from all possibility of misinterpretation the doctrine concerning the Holy Spirit. This doctrine is more fully expounded in chaps. xiv.—xvi., where see Notes.

(40) **Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying . . .**—The reading of the best MSS. is, "Some of the people therefore, when they heard these sayings."

**Of a truth this is the prophet**—*i.e.*, the Prophet foretold by Moses in Deut. xviii. 15. (Comp. Notes on chaps. i. 21 and vi. 14.)

(41) **Others said this is the Christ.**—The Messiah is distinguished from the Prophet in the words of the multitude there, as in the question of the legates of the Sanhedrin, chap. i. 20, 21.

**Shall Christ come out of Galilee?**—The answer "No" is expected, and the tense is present—*Surely the Messiah cometh not out of Galilee?*

(42) **Hath not the scripture said . . .**—Comp. the prophecies in Mic. v. 1; Isa. xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5.

**Where David was.**—Comp. the history in 1 Sam. xvi.

It has often been asked, sometimes in the spirit of objection, sometimes in the spirit of inquiry, how the Apostle, if he really knew the history of our Lord's birth at Bethlehem, could record these questions without a correction. But in these verses he is giving the feelings and opinions of the multitude, and it is a mark of the truthfulness of his narrative that he gives them just as they really occurred. He, remembering the events as they took place, can with perfect historic fitness record the passing thoughts and words, erroneous as they were. A writer of the second century could not possibly have unintentionally made so great a mistake, with the earlier Gospels before him; nor could he have intentionally so thrown himself into the spirit of a Jewish multitude as to invent the question. (Comp. verse 52, and references in Note there.)

(43) **There was a division among the people.**—The word for division is our word "schism." It is found in the earlier Gospels in one instance only, "the rent is made worse" (Matt. ix. 16; Mark ii. 21). This is nearer to the older meaning of the word, which is used, for example, of the hoofs of animals, and the leaves of trees. St. John uses it only to mark this rent into two parties of the Jewish multitude, here and in chaps. ix. 16 and x. 19. In St. Paul it is used of the divisions of the Church at Corinth (1 Cor. i. 10; xi. 18; xii. 25). The use of the word in its ethical sense may belong in some special way to Ephesus, for only in writings from this city do we find it in Biblical Greek. Later, both the word and the fact denoted by it passed into the history of the Church.

(44) **And some of them would have taken him**—*i.e.*, those who asked "Doth the Christ, then, come out of Galilee?" (verse 41.) The officers of the Sanhedrin were present all this time (verse 32), and are immediately mentioned as distinct from the "some" of this verse.

**No man laid hands on him.**—Comp. verse 30. The reason is not here repeated. The fact is in part explained by the existence of a section who received Him as the Prophet and as the Christ, and in part by the power of His presence and words which impressed even the officers sent to take Him. (Comp. chap. xviii. 6.)

(45) **Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees.**—(Comp. Note on chap. xviii. 3.) They had been sent (verse 32), not with a definite warrant to bring Him by force, but to watch their opportunity, and seize any pretext for doing so which may arise. "The chief priests and Pharisees" are the Sanhedrin who met (verse 32), and, though it was a festival, seemed to have continued in session, expecting the return of their servants.

**Why have ye not brought him?**—Their question shows the object of the mission. It is asked in the bitterness of disappointed craft. In the presence of the multitude they dared not proceed by open force, and the influence they feared was every hour gaining ground. If their officers could have brought Him on some technical charge away from the people and into their own chamber, all would then have been in their own hands.

him? (46) The officers answered, Never man spake like this man. (47) Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? (48) Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? (49) But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed. (50) Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night,[a] being one of them,) (51) Doth our law judge *any* man,[b] before it hear him, and know what he doeth? (52) They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

[a] ch. 3. 2.

[b] Deut. 17. 8, &c., and 19.15.

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(46) **Never man spake like this man.**—Some of the oldest MSS., including the Vatican, have a shorter text, "Never man spake thus"; but the longer reading is to be preferred. The very officers acknowledged His power, and tell the professed teachers, whose opinions and words were the rule of all Jewish life, that never man spake as He whom they sought to take! It is probable that in the section immediately preceding (verses 32—34), St. John gives us only a *résumé* of what Jesus had said, and that words which have not come down to us were among those which produced so profound an impression on the officers.

(47) **Are ye also deceived?**—The emphasis is upon the *ye.* "Ye whose duty it is simply to obey, who were sent to bring Him captive before us—do ye also yield to His power?" It is the Pharisees who ask this, and their spirit is shown in the matter of their question. They make no inquiry as to what He had said, though it must have struck them as a phenomenon demanding explanation that their own officials had been convinced by His teaching. It is at once assumed that they, too, had been *deceived.* It is this sect of the Pharisees who speak of Him as "that *deceiver*" (Matt. xxvii. 63).

(48) **The rulers** were the Sanhedrin, among whose official duties it was to prevent the introduction of false doctrines. (Comp. Note on i. 19.) "The Pharisees" were the orthodox party of the day, and they are the persons who ask the question. The matter was to be decided by authority, and not by truth. In the pride of the certainty that no one in a position of power or authority had believed on Jesus, they ask the scornful question, "Hath any one of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed?" They are stung to the very heart at seeing first the multitude, then their own officials, going after Him. They know not that there is one sitting in their midst, both ruler and Pharisee, who long before had listened to the teaching of the Galilean, and was in heart, if not in name, a disciple (chap. iii.), and that during this very feast many of the chief Jews will believe on Him (chap. viii. 30, 31).

(49) **But this people who knoweth not the law . . .**—The words express "Those people there, among whom you have been, and with whose opinion you have been coinciding, instead of holding the authoritative opinion which we have declared, and which we alone can declare. We are the interpreters of the Law, and have the key of knowledge. That ignorant rabble uninstructed in the Law are cursed."

**Are cursed.**—The writings of the Rabbis are full of scorn and contempt for the untutored multitude, whom they called *‘am hāāretz*, "people of the earth," as opposed to those instructed in the Law, whom they called *‘ām kōdesh*, "holy people." These words are an expression of this contempt. Some have supposed that they are meant to express the ban of excommunication, which they use as a weapon of compulsion in chap. ix. 22, but this is quite out of the question as applied here to the multitude.

(50) On the character of Nicodemus, see Notes on chap. iii. His position here is that of a friend of Jesus, who still does not dare to declare himself His open follower.

**He that came to Jesus by night.**—Comp. Note on iii. 2. The better reading here is, probably, *he that came to Him before.*

**Being one of them** contains the answer to their question, "Hath any one (as above) of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him?" (verse 48).

(51) **Doth our law judge any man?**—He identifies Himself with them. He, like they, is an expounder of the Law. The force of the question is in the word "Law," which they had used but the moment before in their scorn for the people who knew not the Law. "Well, this Law, which we do know and understand, doth it judge without open investigation?" Did they in their blind zeal forget such passages as Ex. xxiii. 1; Deut. i. 16, 17; xix. 15? They had determined a death, and were seeking to carry their sentence into effect in direct contravention of the Law. This holy people, instructed in the Law—they were the Law-breakers.

**Before it hear him.**—The better reading is, *unless it hear first from him.*

**And know what he doeth**—*i.e.,* know the deed for which he is tried.

(52) **Art thou also of Galilee?**—They seek to avoid his question, to which there could have been but one answer, by a counter-question expressing their surprise at the position he is taking: "Surely thou art not also of Galilee?" "Thou art not His countryman, as many of this multitude are?" They imply that Nicodemus could not have asked a question which claimed for Jesus the simple justice of the Law itself, without being, like Him, a Galilean.

**Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.**—The words mean, "Search the records, examine, scrutinize the authorities." (Comp. chap. v. 39.) They seek to pass from the matter of fact immediately before them to the question of authority. Their generalisation includes an historical error which cannot be explained away. Jonah is described in 2 Kings xiv. 25 as of Gath-hepher, which was a town of Zebulun, in Lower Galilee. Possibly Elkosh, the birthplace of Nahum, was also in Galilee, and Hosea was certainly a prophet of the Northern Kingdom, though not necessarily of Galilee. Adverse criticism would lay this error also to the charge of the Evangelist. (Comp. Notes on verse 42, and chaps. i. 45 and viii. 33.) But the obvious explanation is, that the Sanhedrin, in their zeal to press their foregone conclusion that Jesus is not a prophet, are not bound by strict accuracy; and it is not unlikely that, in the general contempt of Judæans for Galilee, this assertion had become a by-word, especially with men with so little of the historical sense as the later Rabbis. As compared with Judæa, it was true that Galilee was not a country of prophets, and by-words of this kind often rest on imperfect generalisations. We have seen that of the great prophets of Christianity all were Galileans. Judas Iscariot alone, of the Twelve Apostles, was probably a Judæan (Note on chap. vi. 71).

(53) And every man went unto his own house.

CHAPTER VIII. — (1) Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. (2) And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. (3) And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, (4) they say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. (5) Now Moses in the law commanded us,[a] that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? (6) This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But

A.D. 32.

[a] Lev. 20. 10.

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(53) The section which follows (chaps. vii. 53--viii. 11) is one of the most striking instances of an undoubted addition to the original text of the Gospel narratives. We shall find reason to believe that it belongs to the Apostolic age, and preserves to us the record of an incident in the life of our Lord, but that it has not come to us from the pen of St. John. (Comp. *Excursus B: Some Variations in the Text of St. John's Gospel.*) While, therefore, it is printed in the text here, our text being a reprint of the Authorised version, without addition or alteration, the reader will observe that it is an insertion which breaks the order of the discourse, and in working out the line of thought will bear this in mind.

**And every man went unto his own house.**—This is not to be taken, then, as marking the close of the discussion in the Sanhedrin. It joins the inserted section with something which has preceded, but we have no means of judging what this was.

VIII.

(1) It is an instructive example of the way in which the artificial division into chapters often mars the sense, that one verse of this section is found at the close of the last chapter, and the remainder in this.

**Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.**—The Mount of Olives is nowhere mentioned by St. John. In chap. xviii. 1 he describes the locality, but without this name (see Note there). His habit, moreover, in giving topographical details of Palestine is to explain them for his Greek readers. (See Note on chap. iv. 5.)

(2) **And early in the morning he came again into the temple.**—This agrees with His custom during the week preceding the Crucifixion. (Comp. Luke xxi. 37, 38.) The words, "and He sat down and taught them," are not found in the Cambridge MS., which is the oldest authority for the section.

(3) **And the scribes and Pharisees . . .**—This is the common phrase of the earlier Gospels, but "the scribes" are never named by St. John. His word to denote the hierarchy in their opposition to Christ is "the Jews." (See Note on chap. i. 19.)

(4) The Cambridge MS. reads, "the priests say unto Him, tempting Him, that they might have to accuse Him," adding the word "priests," and placing here the first words of the sixth verse of the Received text.

(5) **Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned.**—If we interpret the words strictly, the case they contemplate is not that referred to in Lev. xx. 10, and quoted here in the margin, but that of Deut. xxii. 23, 24, which was the only case for which stoning was specified as a punishment. It would be a case of rare occurrence, and perhaps for this very reason, one on which the opinions of later Rabbis were divided. Strangulation was regarded as the punishment intended when no other was specified; and in the Talmudic distinction in cases of this kind, stoning and strangulation are named as the respective punishments:—"Filia Israelitæ, si adultera cum nupta, strangulanda; cum desponsata tantum, lapidanda. Filia Sacerdotis, si adultera cum nupta, lapidanda; cum desponsata tantum, comburenda (*Sanhedrin*, fol. 51, 2).

**But what sayest thou?**—The question is, like that about the tribute money (Matt. xxii. 17), a snare in which they hope to take Him whatever answer He gives. If He answers that she should be stoned, this would excite the opposition of the multitude, for a lax state of morality had practically made the laws against unchastity a dead letter. The immorality of Rome had spread through the provinces of the empire, and although the Jews were less infected by it than others, the court of the Herods had introduced its worst forms, and Christ Himself speaks of them as "an evil and adulterous generation" (Matt. xii. 39. Comp. Jas. iv. 4). To have pronounced for a severe law against common forms of sin would have been to undermine popular support, and it is this only that the rulers had to fear. To have pronounced for capital punishment would moreover have brought Him into collision with the Roman government, which reserved to itself the power of life and death. (Comp. chaps. xviii. 31 and xix. 7.) Had He uttered a word in derogation of the majesty of the Roman empire, the charge of treason—in which case to be accused was practically to be condemned—would at once have been brought against Him. (Comp. Notes on chap. xix. 12, 15.) It is clearly the more severe view that the form of the question is intended to draw forth. "Moses said, in express words, . . .; what dost Thou say? You surely will not differ from Moses?" But if He had taken the laxer view, then this, like the Sabbath question, would have been a charge of breaking the Law. He would have been brought before the Sanhedrin as a false Messiah, for the true Messiah was to establish the Law.

(6) On the text, see Note on verse 4. The last words, in italics, which are an explanatory gloss, should also be omitted. The verse will then read, "But Jesus stooped down, and with His finger wrote on the ground"—or, more exactly, *was writing on the ground.* It is the imperfect of the continued action, and it points to the narrator's vivid remembrance of the scene. What precise meaning we are to attach to this action is, and must remain, uncertain. Any inquiry as to what He wrote is excluded by the fact that the narrative would certainly have recorded it had it been known; and though writing on sand was practised in the Rabbinic schools, this writing was on the pavement of the Temple (verse 2). We have to seek the meaning, then, in the symbolism of the action, remembering that the teaching by action and gesture, common everywhere, has always been specially common in the East; and of the many interpretations which may be given, that which seems upon the whole least liable to objection is, that He deprecated the office of judge which they wished to impose on Him,

Jesus stooped down, and with *his* finger wrote on the ground, *as though he heard them not.* (7) So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you,[a] let him first cast a stone at her. (8) And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. (9) And they which heard *it*, being convicted by *their own* conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even* unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. (10) When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? (11) She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said

[a] Deut. 17. 7.

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and chose this method of intimating that He took no interest in what they were saying. The commentators tell us that this was a common method of signifying intentional disregard.

An alternative interpretation may be suggested. They had quoted the Law, and asked for His opinion. They were themselves the interpreters of the Law. He claimed no such office. (Comp. Luke xii. 14.) He stoops down and writes, and the action intimates that the Law of God was written on tables of stone, and its decrees were immutable. They, by their technical interpretation and tradition, were making it of none effect. He came to fulfil it. The majesty of duty is sinned against by these refinements of casuistry. They are now daring to violate the sacredness of law by making it the subject of a question by which they hope to encompass His death. The solemn silence, as He stooped down in that Temple and wrote upon its pavement, must have spoken in a power greater than that of words.

(7) **So when they continued asking him.**—He would have avoided their question, and continued, as is here implied, for some time in the action of writing; but they will now interrupt that action. It seems to them that He cannot avoid the snare in which they have placed Him, and that He is seeking the only escape in silence. But there is an answer of which they think not, and this He stands up to give.

**He that is without sin among you.**—The word rendered "without sin" is frequent in the classical writers, but is found in this place only in the New Testament. It takes here a special meaning from the context, and is to be understood of the class of sins of which her sin was an instance. (Comp. the word "sinner" as used in Luke vii. 37.) Of the immorality among the Jewish rulers, which gives force to these words, evidence is not wanting. Still the wider meaning is probably not excluded. They who ask this question about the Seventh Commandment were themselves breaking the Sixth and the Ninth. It is to be noted, in the application of this answer, that our Lord does not lay down sinlessness as the necessary condition of fitness for taking part in the punishment of guilt. This would be to nullify law, for there could be then no human executive power. He is not speaking in a case brought before the appointed tribunal, but in a case where men assume to themselves the position of judges of another's guilt. In the judge, while he wears the robe of justice, the individual man ceases to exist, and he becomes the representative of God; but these can now speak only as men, and condemn her only by the contrast of a higher purity. (Comp. Notes on chap. x. 34 *et seq.*)

**Let him first cast a stone at her.**—The Received text and some MSS. (not including the Cambridge MS.) read "the stone," the stone referred to in verse 5. "Let him first" means "let him first of you"; not "let him cast the first stone." This was the duty of the witnesses. (See marginal reference.) We must not take the words to express permission only; it is an imperative, expressing command.

(8) **And wrote on the ground.**—The Cambridge MS. inserts, "with His finger," as in verse 6. The repeated action repeats His determination to avoid the office of judge. He has answered them, and He leaves His answer to do its work. There is a law written in their hearts, and this, while He now writes on the ground, is convicting them.

There is a strange addition at the end of the verse, in one of the older MSS. of this section, showing how men have tried to give a definite meaning to the action of writing. It reads, "and wrote on the ground the sin of each one of them."

(9) The readings of the texts here differ considerably, but without any essential difference of meaning. "Being convicted by their own conscience" is probably an addition made by some copyist to explain the meaning, which is quite clear without it.

**Beginning at the eldest.**—Literally, *beginning at the elders;* but our version gives the right sense, and prevents the possible mistake of understanding the word to mean the elders of the people. So "the last" should probably be taken, not of the lowest in official rank, but of the last who went out.

**And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.**—The scribes and Pharisees had probably stood close to Him. The woman was at some little distance, naturally shrinking from their gaze; but there is a crowd of people, including the disciples, around her, for they are in the Temple, and before this interruption He was engaged in teaching the people (verse 2). Her accusers had "set her in the midst" (verse 2), where she now stands. The whole scene is pictured with the minute detail of an eye-witness, who remembers how the persons were grouped, how the accusers went out one after another, and then, how Jesus was left alone, apart from the crowd, but that the others were still present.

(10) **Where are those thine accusers?**—Here again the Cambridge MS. has a shorter reading—"Where are they?" "Hath no man condemned thee?" or, more exactly, *Did no man condemn thee?* The "man" is in contrast to "thine accusers" or "they." "Of all who brought the charge against thee, was there not one to condemn thee?" The question is put to her to lead to thoughts of her sin. He has spoken words which have carried a lesson to them: he has now a lesson for her.

(11) **She said, No man, Lord.**—She simply answers His question. There is no plea for forgiveness. There is no attempt at defence. We know not what passed in her heart; we know not what was written upon her countenance. We know not whether the word "Lord" was simply the "Sir" of courtesy, or whether it contained something of the reverence of worship. He knew all.

unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

(12) Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world:[a] he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of

a ch. 1. 5 & 9. 5.

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**Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.**—Or, more exactly, *and be no longer a sinner.* There is no expression of forgiveness or peace as we find in other cases. (Comp. Matt. ix. 2; Luke vii. 48.) He does not condemn her, for "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved" (chap. iii. 17). His words must have come to her as words of mercy in contrast to the angry words of those who dragged her before Him. He does not condemn her, and yet by these words she must have been condemned more truly than by any words of accuser. He does not condemn *her*; and yet the very words which bid her go are the condemnation of her sin. (Comp. chap. v. 14.) As in the case of the woman of Samaria (chap. iv.), there is something in the tone and manner of dealing with this woman which goes beyond all words; and as we read the narrative the heart completes the picture, and we feel it preserves for us a real incident in our Lord's ministry of mercy. It is a mark of truthfulness that the narrative tells us no more. It has not the completeness of an apocryphal story. We feel we should like to know more. She passed from His presence as her accusers had before. What came afterwards to her and to them? Did she, in obedience to the words now heard, go forth to a new life, rising through penitence and faith to pardon, peace, purity? Did they who shrink from His presence now, so learn His words as to come to that Presence again, seeking not judgment on others, but pardon for themselves? Over all the veil is drawn. We may not trace the history of lives known only to themselves and to God; but the lessons are patent, and remain to condemn every human judgment of another's sin; to condemn every sin in our own lives; to declare to every sinner the forgiveness which condemns not.

[(2) JESUS IS TRUTH, LIGHT, AND LOVE (*cont.*).
(*b*) *Jesus is Light* (chaps. viii. 12—ix. 41).
(*a*) He declares Himself to be the Light, and appeals to the witness of the Father and of Himself (verses 12—20).]

(12) **Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world.**—Omitting the inserted section, this verse immediately follows chap. vii. 52, but the words mark an interval, after which the discourse is resumed. Jesus had ceased to speak, but now speaks "again"; and St. John remembers that the words were suggested by some incident which occurred. It was "then," or *therefore*, that He found occasion to utter this truth, because the outer form in which He may clothe it was present to their minds. Once again we shall find this mould, in which the truth shapes itself, in the ritual of the Feast of Tabernacles. On the eve of the Lesser Festival (see Note on chap. vii. 14), and on each of the five nights which followed, there was an illumination in the court of the Temple to celebrate the "Rejoicing of the Water-Drawing." Four large golden candelabra shed their light through the whole city. Then there was dancing and singing, and the music of instruments, which was continued through the night, until at daybreak the procession to the Pool of Siloam was formed. Once again, too, the ritual of the Feast of Tabernacles is a memorial of the wilderness life. As the water-drawing was bound up with thoughts of the water given in abundance to those dying of thirst, so this illumination was bound up with thoughts of the pillar of fire which was the guide of those who walked in darkness. And in this case, as in that, it is probably the absence of the incident on the last day of the feast which gives special force to our Lord's words. Since the teaching of the last chapter, there had been an interval of, it may be, several hours. We may naturally think that the shades of evening were now drawing on. He is standing in the Treasury near to the court of the women (Note on verse 20), where for the six nights last past there had been a great light, reminding those who could read its meaning of the greater light which illumined the footsteps of their fathers. On this night the light is not to shine; but the true Light, which was ever in the world, is now in His own Temple, speaking the words of light and life to His own people. There is a Light there whose rays are to illumine, not only the Temple, or Jerusalem, or Judæa, or the Dispersion, but the world.

**He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness.**—Strong and full of hope as these words are in the English rendering, the Greek is more emphatic still. The negative is in its strongest form, expressing "shall by no means," "shall in no wise," "walk in darkness." The possibility is excluded from the thought. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." If a man makes a false step in life, it is because he seeks other guides in his own thoughts or in subjection to the thoughts of other men. He that seeks to follow the true Light—to follow, not precede it; to follow always, not only when it coincides with his own will; to follow patiently and trustfully, step by step, wherever it may lead—cannot walk in darkness, for he is never without the presence of the Light. Here, as so often, stress is laid on the certainty and universality of the divine love on the one side, and the action of the human will on the other. There can be no doubt, "shall by no means walk in darkness"; there can be no limit, "*he that* followeth"; there can be no halting, "he that *followeth.*" The light ever points the way; it is he who day by day follows it who cannot miss the way. Perception of truth attends its practice. The true journey of this life is here presented as a constant activity; in vii. 37, the source of this action is found in a constant receptivity.

**But shall have the light of life.**—For the thought of "light" and "life" in contrast to "darkness" and "death," comp. Note on chap. i. 5. The sense of the present passage is that he who follows Christ, not only has a light which guides his feet, but that through participation in the Messianic life he actually possesses that light in himself. He is no more dead, but has eternal life. (Comp. chap. iii. 15.) He no more abides in darkness (chap. xii. 46), but the Light which lighteneth every man abideth in him.

This verse is one of the many instances in which our familiar knowledge of the words of Jesus, in some degree, takes from the impression they would leave on us if we heard them for the first time. There is in them the calm assertion of conscious divinity, which in its very simplicity carries its own proof. It needed no formal proof, for He Himself knows it to be true; it needed no formal proof, for those who heard Him felt His words to be divine—"Never man spake like this life. (13) The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true. (14) Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself,[a] *yet* my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go. (15) Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. (16) And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. (17) It is also written in

[a] ch. 5. 31.

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Man." "He taught them as One having authority, and not as the scribes." (Comp. verse 28.) The witness to the existence of natural light is the eye formed to receive its rays; the witness to the existence of the Light of the world is the eye of the spirit conscious of a night of darkness, which has passed into the brightness of the presence of the Sun of Righteousness.

(13) **Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.**—Better, *Thou bearest witness of Thyself; Thy witness is not true.* (Comp. Note on chap. v. 31.) The Authorised version here, by a change of word, renders the connection less obvious than it really is. The Pharisees, standing probably in the front of the crowd listening to Him, bring a technical objection to His statement, and one which He had Himself admitted the force of. "According to your own words," they mean, "what you now say is not valid." They stand in the light of day, but demand a formal proof that the Sun has risen.

(14) **Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true.**—For "record" read in each instance *witness*, as in verse 13. The pronoun is emphatic. "Even if *I* do bear witness of Myself, yet My witness is true." He had before quoted their law of evidence (chap. v. 31), and showed that He fulfilled its canons. He is about to show this again (verses 17 and 18), but He claims first that in reality the law cannot apply to Him. They claim a human proof of that which transcends human knowledge. They claim the evidence of a witness, to a truth for which there could not possibly be a human witness.

**For I know whence I came, and whither I go.**—The requirement of two witnesses was based on the imperfection of individual knowledge, and the untrustworthiness of individual veracity. His evidence, as that of One who knew every circumstance affecting that of which He testified, was valid, for the perfection of His knowledge implied that He was divine. He and He only of all who have appeared in human form, knew the origin and issue of His life; He and He only knew the Father's home from which He came, and to which He was about to return. For the same words, "I go," or, *I go away*, as applied to His voluntary death, comp. chap. vii. 33.

**But ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.**—The Greek word for "cannot tell" is the same as that for "know" in the previous clause. For "and" most of the better MSS. read *or*. Making these corrections we have, *But ye know not whence I come, or whither I go.* The change of tense is to be noted. Speaking of His own knowledge, He refers to the Incarnation in the historic past, "I came." Speaking of their continued ignorance, He refers to the coming as continuing in the present. Every renewed act and word was a coming to them from God. (See chap. iii. 31.) He knew, in the fulness of knowledge, the whence of past coming and the whither of future going. They knew neither the one nor the other. They do not even know His present mission. Once again His present teaching takes up words uttered before. They had said, "When the Christ cometh no man knoweth whence He is" (chap. vii. 27). He has, then, fulfilled their test. He had said, "Ye both know Me, and do know whence I am" (chap. vii. 28); but that knowledge was of the earthly life only, and He now speaks to them of heaven.

(15) **Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.**—The pronouns are placed in emphatic contrast. "You on your part . . . I for My part." We must beware of the common mistake of finding the origin of this thought of judgment in verses 10 and 11, which as we have seen do not belong to this context. It arises rather from verse 13. The statement of the Pharisees, "Thou art bearing witness concerning Thyself; Thy witness is not true," was a condemnatory judgment based upon appearances. (Comp. Note on chap. vii. 24.) They allowed these appearances to carry them away from a righteous judgment. They looked at the form of human flesh, and declared His witness false. Had they listened to the words He spoke, and judged according to their spiritual meaning, they would have heard the voice of the Messiah and have seen the Light of the world.

This thought of the Pharisees, in their ignorance judging that which they knew not, suggests by contrast the thought that He in perfect knowledge judges no one. (Comp. chap. iii. 17.)

(16) **And yet if I judge, my judgment is true.**—Though judgment was not the object of His mission, it was, as He had taught in chap. iii. 19 (see Note there), the result of the manifestation of the Light. But in the cases in which the result followed, the judgment was not according to the flesh, but was in accord with the essential truth. The better reading here is, probably, the deeper word for *ideally true*, which we have had before. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 9.)

**For I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.**—Comp. Note on chap. v. 30. Here, as there, He identifies every act of judgment with the eternal and unchangeable truth of the Father.

(17) **It is also written in your law.**—He now proceeds to show again that the technical requirement of the Law was satisfied by His witness. The term "*your* law" is material, as addressed to those who were professed expounders of it and accused Him of being a transgressor of it. (Comp. the parallel reference to the Law in chaps. x. 34, xv. 25.) To assert that Jesus placed Himself in a position of antagonism to the Mosaic law, is to forget the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v. 17); and to assert that the Jesus of the Fourth Gospel differs in this respect from the character as portrayed by the earlier Evangelists, is to forget the teaching of the last verse of chap. v., and, indeed, to miss the whole force of these very passages. He does not, indeed, say "our law," as it was for them what it could not be for Him; but He mentions it to show in each case that He fulfilled it.

**That the testimony of two men is true.**—See Deut. xvii. 6 and xix. 15, and comp. Notes on Matt. xviii. 16 and Mark xiv. 55, 56. The words are here quoted freely, and "two men" is substituted for "two or three witnesses," which we find in both the passages in Deuteronomy. This prepares the way for the full thought of the "witness," in the next verse. The requirement of the Law would be satisfied with the your law,[a] that the testimony of two men is true. (18) I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me. (19) Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also. (20) These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.

(21) Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and

[a] Deut. 17. 6; Matt. 18. 16.

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evidence of two men: He has the witness of two Persons, but each is divine.

(18) **I am one that bear witness of myself.**—The Greek has no word to express the English "one." It is more exactly, *I am He who beareth witness.* The twofold witness is (1) in His own individuality—I, who know whence I came and whither I go, testify of Myself to you who know neither; and (2) in the fact that the Father sent Him. He is the Ambassador from the Father, accredited by the Father's works and the voice from heaven, and His word is official as well as personal.

The thought is closely connected with that of verse 16. His judgment is not individual judgment, because of the union with the Father. His witness is not only individual witness, but that of the Father also. The whole passage should be carefully compared with the close of chap. v.

(19) **Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father?**—The words seem to be asked in scorn. "You speak of two witnesses. We accept you as one. Where is the other? He should be present before us if his evidence is to be accepted." They must have known well from the earlier discourse that He claimed God as His Father, and the recurring phrase, "the Father that sent Me," must have now made this clear. We are not to read in these words, then, any reference to a father in the flesh, though this interpretation is that of many ancient and modern expositors. The question, moreover, is not, "Who is Thy Father?" but "Where is Thy Father?" The question is asked in another spirit in chap. xiv. 8.

It may be that to their scorn is added the desire to draw from Him express words on which to base an accusation. They perhaps expect an answer such as "My Father who is in heaven." (Comp. the direct question in chap. x. 24, and the adjuration of the high priest, Matt. xxvii. 64.) But the time has not yet come. His answer contains no words which they could lay hold of as a technical ground for blasphemy.

**Ye neither know me, nor my Father.**—He traces their ignorance of the Father to its true cause, *i.e.*, to their neglect of the only means by which God could be known. This thought has met us already in chap. i. 18 (see Note there), and will meet us again in chaps. xiv. 9 and xv. 3. Here the Pharisees think they know Him, and ask "Where is Thy Father?" The answer is, that if they really knew the witness of one, they would know the witness of both.

(20) **These words spake Jesus in the treasury.**—Comp. Notes on Mark xii. 41 and Luke xxi. 1. From the passage it is clear that the word "treasury" was applied to the brazen trumpet-shaped chests placed in the court of the women for the reception of alms. There were thirteen of them, and each bore an inscription showing to what purpose the alms placed in it would be devoted. Here the word is apparently used of the place itself in which the chests were deposited, or the preposition must be taken as including the immediate neighbourhood. This notice of place is interesting in many ways. The court of the women was one of the most public places in the Temple area. He taught, then, openly and fearlessly. The chamber in which the Sanhedrin held their session was between the court of the women and that of the men. They had on that very day been assembled to take counsel against Him (vii. 45—52). This gives point to the words which follow, "and no man laid hands on Him, for His hour was not yet come." The court of the women, moreover, was the spot where the great candelabra stood. (See Note on verse 12.)

[(*b*) *Jesus is Light* (*continued*).

(β) His return to the Father misunderstood by the Jews, and explained by Him (verses 21—29).]

(21) **Then said Jesus again unto them.**—The best MSS. omit the word "Jesus," and read, *He said, therefore, again unto them.* The word "therefore" connects the discourse which follows with something which has gone before, probably with the fact that no man laid hands on Him, for His hour was not yet come. He is still free to address the multitude, and after an interval does so. This interval is marked by the word "again," but is not necessarily more than a short break in the discourse. We shall find reason for believing (see Note on chap. ix. 14) that the whole of the teaching and work which is included between chaps. vii. 37 and x. 21, is probably to be placed on the last and great day of the feast. The persons addressed are the people assembled round Him in the Temple. Some of the officials take part in the discussion, for it is "the Jews" who reply in the next verse. We have to think, it may be, of men gathered together in small groups discussing what He had before said. Some are really inquiring with earnest hearts about Him. The rulers are trying to suppress the growing conviction of the multitude. There are thus two currents of thought and feeling. One is found in the honest hearts of the untutored multitude; they know little of argument, and dare not interpret the Scriptures for themselves, but in their rough-and-ready way they are grasping the truth; the heart of man is bowing before the presence of its God. The other is found in the priests and rulers to whom, as a holy and learned caste, the representatives of God to man and the interpreters of their Sacred Books, the people are in intellectual and moral bondage. They seek to bind with their fetters hearts that are finding their way to the truth. Some of these groups have moved on, it may be, and others have taken their place. Seeing a new audience near Him, Jesus speaks to them again; for it is not probable that the words of verse 27 apply wholly to the same persons as those in verse 19.

**I go my way.**—The rendering is a little tinged by the following thought. The Greek word is the same as in verse 14, where it is rendered "I go." There, as here, *I go away* is better. It was, let us again remind ourselves, the last day of the feast, and now its closing hours have come. That thronging multitude would be before the close of another day, leaving Jerusalem to spread itself through all the extent of Palestine and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. (22) Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. (23) And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. (24) I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins. (25) Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even *the*

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the Dispersion. He also is going away. Many of them will never see Him again. Before another Feast of Tabernacles He will, in a deeper sense, be going away. They will seek Him, but it will be too late. There is in all the discourse the solemn feeling that these are the last words for many who hear Him.

**Ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins.**—Comp. Notes on chap. vii. 34, 36. But here the result of the seeking and not finding is declared in the sadness of its fatal issue. "In your sins" is not quite exact, and is, perhaps, somewhat misleading. The Greek has the singular not the plural, and should be rendered "in your sin." It points out the state of sin, rather than actual transgressions. This latter thought is expressed where the words are repeated in verse 24.

(22) **Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself?**—They see the deeper meaning of His words, and yet cannot see how that meaning is to be fulfilled. "He is going away, and He clearly refers to His death. But the issues of life are in the darkness of the future. Who can know the hour of His own departure? There is only one class of persons who can speak with certainty of thus going away, and these are persons who by their own act fix the limit of their own lives."

**Because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.**—Comp. Note on chap. vii. 35. Then they had asked in scorn if He would go to the Dispersion and teach the heathen? If so, they certainly could not follow Him. Here there is the same scorn. If He intends to go to Hades, He will indeed be beyond their reach. They expect to go to Abraham's bosom: between Him and them there will be the great gulf which no one can pass. (Comp. Notes on Luke xvi. 22—26.) Many expositors have seen here a reference to the deeper darkness which, in current Jewish belief, fell on the souls of those who had by their own act passed to the other world. This is supported by the speech of Josephus at Jotapata (*Wars*, iii. 8, § 5). Their words may imply, "If He is going to that depth, well may He say 'Whither I go, ye cannot come.'" But if this meaning were expressed in their words, we should have expected some reference to it in the answer of our Lord; and if it be expressed at all it is in *their* words. It has no sanction in thought or word from Him.

(23) There is indeed a gulf which they cannot pass, but it is not that between souls in Abraham's bosom and souls in Hades. It is the gulf between heaven and earth. This He brings out in two pairs of antithetic clauses. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 3.) These clauses interpret each other, and no deeper meaning is to be given to the first pair than is borne by the second. We may arrange them in a pair of affirmatives and a pair of negatives—

"Ye are from beneath;" "ye are of this world."
"I am from above" (not from beneath); "I am not of this world."

We have thus the full Hebrew expression of one thought, and this is the thought which John the Baptist, from another point of view, taught his disciples in chap. iii. 31. They are by origin and nature of the earth. He was by origin and nature from heaven. Of the earth, their feelings and thoughts and life were of the earth, and, by devotion to things of the earth, they are destroying the spirit made in the image of God, which is within them, and the link between them and heaven. He is from heaven in origin, and is divine in nature. He has come to reveal the heavenly and the divine to the earthly and the human. In Him, and in Him only, can their spirits find deliverance from sin, and find the true life; for in Him, and in Him only, the divine and the human meet.

(24) **I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins.**—He now further explains what He meant by these words in verse 21. The words, as they are twice repeated in this verse, differ in two particulars from their earlier form. One is, that the singular substantive "sin" has given place to the plural "sins." He brings home to them the definite and known acts of sin which resulted from their sinful state. Another is, that the order of the words is changed. It is not so easy to preserve this in English; but we may read in verse 21 "*In your sin* ye shall die," and here "*Ye shall die* in your sins." The believing not is itself a state of sin. (Comp. chap. xvi. 9.) It is a separation from the only source of life, and is necessarily accompanied by death.

**If ye believe not that I am he.**—The word "He" is not found in the Greek text, and this is marked by the italics in English; but they have been thinking and speaking of the Messiah, though the name has not been mentioned since chap. vii. 42. It was *the* name ever first in their thoughts, and our version represents the generally received interpretation. It may, however, be doubted whether this interpretation gives to us the full meaning of the words "I am," as used in this absolute way by our Lord, and as recorded in this Gospel. Within this same chapter they meet us again in verses 28 and 58, and in the account of the arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane we find them repeated. (See Notes on chap. xviii. 5 *et seq.*) The words had a sacred history which told of the revelation of Jehovah to Moses (Ex. iii. 14). Uttered as they were by Him who had just claimed to be "from above" and to be "not of this world," and uttered as they were within the precincts of Jehovah's Temple, and in the presence of His priests and people, they may well have carried to their minds this deeper meaning, and have been intended as a declaration of His divine existence. The meaning then would be, "If ye believe not that I am, that in Me there is existence which is the life of all who receive it, ye must die in your sins."

(25) **Then said they unto him, Who art thou?**—They ask the question in the tone of scorn which they have already expressed in verse 22. The pronoun is the emphatic word: "*Thou*, who art *thou?*" and the phrase was in frequent use to express contempt. He had said, "I am;" but they do not understand the words to be a divine name. Long before this time the name formed from these words, and which is now usually, but wrongly, read "Jehovah," had been regarded as too sacred to be uttered. They appear to take the sentence as though it was incomplete, "I am . . .;" "Well, who art thou?" We have again, as in verse 19, to note the attempt to draw from Him some definite

*same* that I said unto you from the beginning. (26) I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him. (27) They understood not that he spake to them of the Father. (28) Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am *he,* and *that* I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. (29) And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone;

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statement which may be made the ground of a technical charge; but this He again avoids.

**And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.**—Almost every word of this answer is in the Greek capable of more than one meaning, and the true interpretation of the whole sentence cannot be decided with certainty. To discuss it with any fulness would be to encumber the page with details which would be unintelligible to the general reader; to discuss it with anything but fulness would be unsatisfactory to the student. There is little room for addition to the investigations which are now accessible. The full notes of Meyer and Stier and Tholuck may be read in English; and Dr. Moulton's addition to his Translation of Winer's *Grammar* (eighth edition, 1877, pp. 581—2), gives in a few words nearly all that can be said on the grammatical difficulty. After a careful consideration of the whole matter, it is believed, though not without hesitation, that the rendering, which is least liable to objection on any ground, is that which regards the answer as itself a question—"What I from the beginning am also speaking to you?" "You ask who I am. This has formed the substance of My teaching from the beginning, and is the substance of My teaching still." (Comp. verse 58.) "Can it be that you ask this?"

(26) **I have many things to say and to judge of you.**—The order of thought here is not certain, and will depend, in part, upon the interpretation we give to the previous verse. These words seem to arise from their judgment of Him as expressed in their scornful question, "Who art thou?" He has, indeed, immediately before (verse 23), spoken of them. He is about in this discourse to do so again. There are present to His mind now many things to say of them, and these, if said, would be in words of condemnation; but He refrains. There is present to His mind also the great work He had to do—to speak to the world the eternal truth of God.

**But he that sent me is true.**—The words express a marked contrast to the words and thoughts with which He would come in contact, if He said and judged concerning them. They refer to the calm repose of the divine life in heaven, as contrasted with the misunderstandings and objections with which the manifestation of that life on earth had been encompassed. He turns from them to the thought of Him who sent Him, and who is true.

**And I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.**—Better, *I speak unto the world the things which I heard from Him.* It is the truth brought into and announced in the world, and which was heard during the pre-incarnate life with the Father. (Comp. verses 28 and 38.)

(27) **They understood not that he spake** (better, *was speaking*) **to them of the Father.**—We have seen in Note on verse 21 that a new discourse commences there, and that the hearers are not necessarily the same as those who had asked the question and heard the answer of verse 19. Still the speakers then, and those spoken of now, are "the Jews" (comp. verses 13 and 22); and they are probably in part identical with those of whom our Lord tells us there, that they knew neither Him nor the Father. Of these men St. John tells us now that they did not know that the Sender and the Father are one. The statement of their want of perception, which strikes us as so marvellous, is made just because it was marvellous. St. John remembers it many years afterwards, and remembers that on account of it Jesus proceeded to declare more fully that every act He did was done in the Father, and that every word He spoke was taught by the Father, and that in every event of His life the Father was present.

(28) **Then said Jesus unto them.**—Better, *Therefore* . . . The teaching arises immediately out of the want of understanding just mentioned.

**When ye have lifted up the Son of man.**—Better, *When ye shall have lifted up* . . . (Comp. Notes on chaps. iii. 14, vi. 62, and xii. 32, 34.) Both the Crucifixion and Ascension are implied here. Now, for the first time, they are marked out as the instruments of the Crucifixion (comp. Acts iii. 15), and therefore the means by which He will return to His Father's throne.

**Then shall ye know . . .**—These words confirm the view that the teaching of these verses arises immediately out of their present ignorance. Then the veil will be removed. Then the death of Christ will be followed by His glory. As we read these words they impress us with that calm of assured certainty with which they are uttered (comp. verse 12) before the events, and reminds us of the signal way in which they were fulfilled. (Comp., *e.g.*, Notes on Matt. xxiii. 39 and Acts ii. 37.)

**That I am he.**—Comp. Note on verse 24.

**And that I do nothing of myself.**—This is dependent on "know that" in the previous clause; as is the remainder of the verse, and probably the first clause of the following verse also. They will then know that He is divine, and that the acts and words which they cannot now understand are part of the divine life in union with the Father. Now they marvel and ask, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" (chap. vii. 15): then they shall know that according as the Father taught Him, He spake these things. Now they cannot understand the witness of the Father (verse 19): then they shall know that He that sent Him was with Him.

(29) **The Father hath not left me alone.**—The Greek words mean exactly, *the Father* (or, as the better MSS. read, without change of meaning, *He*) *left Me not alone,* and they are sometimes taken to refer to the time of His mission into the world. The context rather points to their application to every moment of life. He was ever conscious of a Presence which they knew not of, but which the future should reveal to them. We shall find Him resting in this consciousness again when He looks on to the dark hour when the disciples shall be scattered every man to his own, and He shall be left as men would think alone. (Comp. Note on chap. xvi. 32.)

for I do always those things that please him.

(30) As he spake these words, many believed on him. (31) Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed; (32) and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

(33) They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall

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**For I do always those things that please him.**—It would be less ambiguous to read, *because I do always . . .* The words furnish the reason for the presence of the Father in every act and moment of His life. All things done by Him at all times were in accordance with the Father's will. In His human nature perpetual communion is conditioned by perpetual obedience. The same thought recurs in His words to the disciples in chap. xv. 10. Comp. also, on the relation of the Son to the Father, Note on chap. v. 19.

Emphasis should be laid here upon the pronoun, "for *I* do always." It was true of His human nature, as distinct from all others, that no act, at any moment of life, had cast its shadow on the brightness of the vision of the Father's presence. Later in this same discourse (verse 46) He appeals to their knowledge of His holy life. Here, in words that none other in human form could ever utter, He appeals to His own consciousness of a life, every act of which was pleasing in the presence of God.

[(*b*) *Jesus is Light* (*continued*).
- (γ) True discipleship and freedom (verses 30—59).
  - Freedom by the Son's word (verses 30—36).
  - Natural and ethical sonship (verses 37—47).
  - Eternal life by the Son's word. The Son's eternity (verses 48—59).]

(30) **Many believed on him.**—Wonder has often been expressed at the want of apprehension spoken of in verse 27. There is surely no less room for wonder in the faith spoken of here. Those who believe are of the rulers ("those Jews," verse 31). The words which they now heard (verses 28, 29) contain nothing of what we commonly call proof. They are an appeal to the future which should prove them true, and to His own consciousness of perfect obedience to the Father's will, and of unbroken realisation of the Father's presence. They are indeed, in part, words which men have since dwelt upon to prove that He who uttered them did not claim to be divine. It was not so with those who heard Him. They are watching for a technical assertion of His divinity, and do not hear it; but they are convinced by the power of His words that He is divine. (Comp. Note on chap. vii. 31.) These scribes and Pharisees feel, as their officers felt before, that "Never man spake like this Man." Where was priest or Rabbi who could appeal to the spotless purity of a life? There is the irresistible power of truth in the appeal which carries conviction to the heart. We have already found in the case of Nicodemus an example, probably not a solitary one, of a faith among the rulers which dared not confess itself. (See also chap. xii. 42.)

(31) **Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him.**—Better, *to those Jews who had believed Him.* The act of faith is mentioned in the previous verse. They are here placed among the believers, with an expression of contrast mixed with, perhaps, something of wonder—Jews and yet believers.

**If ye continue in my word.**—Or, *If ye abide in My word.* Comp. Note on chap. xv. 7, where we have the opposite form of the thought, "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you." See also for this idea of abiding, Notes on chap. v. 37, 38. His word was the expression of the eternal truth of God, and He therefore was the one great Teacher. Every other must sit as a disciple at His feet, and continue in daily learning and in daily living to grasp the truth which, in that word and that word only, was revealed to man.

Here, as very frequently, part of the force of the sentence is expressed in the emphasis of the pronoun, "If *ye* continue in My word." "Ye, on your part, ye who now believe, but have not the courage to rank yourselves openly among My disciples."

**Then are ye my disciples indeed.**—The insertion of "then" does not improve the rendering—"If ye continue in My word, ye are My disciples indeed." The words imply that He who reads the heart has no confidence in this momentary conviction, which will not stand the test of true discipleship, and all that this includes. (Comp. Notes on chaps. ii. 23—25 and vi. 66.)

(32) **And ye shall know the truth.**—In the great Intercessory Prayer of chap. xvii., Jesus prays for His disciples: "Sanctify them in the truth: Thy word is truth" (verse 17). In the answer to the question of Thomas in chap. xiv., He declares, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (verse 6). It is this thought that is present in the connection between continuance in His word and knowledge of the truth here. These Jews professed to know the truth, and to be the official expounders of it. They had yet to learn that truth was not only a system, but also a power; not only something to be written or spoken, but also something to be felt and lived. If they abide in His word they will indeed be His disciples; living the life of truth, they will gain perception of truth. "Being true," they will "in love grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Eph. iv. 15).

**And the truth shall make you free.**—Here, as in chap. xvii. 17, truth and holiness are spoken of as correlative. The light of truth dispels the darkness in which lies the stronghold of evil. Sin is the bondage of the powers of the soul, and this bondage is willed because the soul does not see its fearful evil. When it perceives the truth, there comes to it a power which rouses it from its stupor, and strengthens it to break the fetters by which it has been bound. Freedom from the Roman rule was one of the national hopes bound up with Messiah's Advent. There is indeed a freedom from a more crushing foe than the legions of Rome. (Comp. Mark v. 9; Luke viii. 30.)

(33) **They answered him**—*i.e.*, the Jews who had believed in Him (verse 31). There is no indication that this answer was made by others standing near, nor would this supposition have been made but for the difficulty of applying some of the words which follow (verses 40, 44) to those who had ever professedly been believers; but the explanation is to be found in our Lord's own warning words in verse 31. He has tested their faith, and they fail in the first steps of discipleship.

**We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man.**—Their pride misinterprets be made free? (34) Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.[a] (35) And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: *but* the Son abideth ever. (36) If the Son therefore

[a] Rom. 6. 20; 2 Pet. 2. 19.

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His words, and expresses itself in a boast which passes the limits of historical truth. It had been promised to Abraham, "I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies" (Gen. xxii. 17). This seed they were. This promise they interpret of national prosperity. Abraham's seed in bondage! the thought is impossible. As in other cases (comp. chap. vii. 52), they forget part of the facts of history, for they have never learned their lessons. The Egyptian slavery and Babylonian captivity are passed over. That very generation witnessed around them the insignia of Rome, paid taxes to Rome, used the coin of Rome, but it was the policy of the empire to leave to the subject provinces a nominal freedom; and it may be that stress is laid on the words "been in bondage," which occur nowhere else in the Gospels. Those then living may have said with truth that they had never been in actual bondage, and the current expectation of the Messiah at that time may have led them to interpret the promise to Abraham specially of themselves.

(34) **Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.**—The Cambridge MS. and some of the Fathers omit the words "of sin"; but this is clearly to avoid the difficulty of the connection of thought, and they must be regarded as an integral part of the text.

**Committeth sin.**—The Greek word is a present participle, expressing the continuance of the deeds of sin. It means, not simply the committing individual sins, from which no man is free, but the state of the life which is sinful; the state which is opposed to doing the will of the Father, and is expressed in other words as "working iniquity" (Matt. vii. 21, 23.) The truth is taught in the generality of a well-known maxim, but it has for them a special application. They claimed to be Abraham's seed, and therefore free. Let their lives decide the question of their freedom. He could appeal (verses 28, 29) to a perfect harmony with the divine will, and therefore had a perfect freedom. For many of them the voice of conscience must have spoken in terrible words, and must have revealed the chain which had bound them, hand and foot, in the slavery of sin.

**Is the servant of sin.**—The word means *bond-servant*, or *slave*. It has been rendered by "bondman," and this brings out the connection of the word with that for "was in bondage," in the last verse.

It is striking that we have this same thought in the letters of both St. Paul and St. Peter. (See margin.)

(35) **And the servant abideth not.**—Better, *Now the bondman abideth not* . . ., as in the last verse.

**The Son abideth ever.**—Better, *for ever*, as in the earlier clause. The Greek words are precisely the same. This contrast between the position of the slave, who is a chattel that may be bought or bartered or sold, and has no affinity with the members of the house, and no permanent right in it; and the son, in whose veins is the master's blood, and who is heir of all things, is obvious and general; but here, again, the present meaning is special. They claim to be the seed of Abraham. Did they remember the history of Isaac and Ishmael? The son of the freewoman abideth in the house; the son of the bondmaid is cast out. Here, once again, too, we have the pupil of Gamaliel taking up and expanding this thought, showing that it was within the range of current exposition. Read carefully Gal. iv. 19—31, remembering that the Epistle belongs to the middle of the half-century which separates the utterance of these words by Christ from their record by St. John.

The Greek word for "abideth" is the word which is rendered "continue" in verse 31, and the Authorised version further obscures the connection by placing a paragraph division between these verses. If we read again verses 31 and 32, noting the close connection between abiding, truth, and freedom; and the next verses, 35 and 36, noting the connection between abiding, the Son, and freedom, we shall have, it is believed, a simpler clue to the meaning than any of the usual explanations.

Our version misleads by the use of the capital. The word "Son" in this verse, should be read "son." The clause is the expression of a legal maxim holding good for all servants and for all sons, but here specially applied to the sonship in Abraham's household. It is not before the next verse that there is the transference of thought to the Son in the household of the Divine Father. In this verse the thought is that if they were really the children of Abraham they would be of Abraham's spiritual nature, abiding in his home, and inheriting the promises made to him. They had not continued in the spiritual freedom of sons, but had departed from the house and had become, spiritually, bondmen.

(36) **If the Son therefore shall make you free.**—Now the thought of verses 31 and 32 is repeated in special reference to the position they had claimed for themselves. There is need for the emancipation of which He has spoken, and His mission in the world is to proclaim it. If they will enter into spiritual union with Him, and *abide* in this new spiritual relation, it will make them new creatures, freed from sin by the power of truth. In the language of St. Paul, as quoted above, "Christ will be formed in them." They will become "members of Christ" and "children of God." The Son of the divine household will make them free, and in Him they will become members of the great family of God Himself. (Comp. the same thought of the divine household as addressed by St. Paul specially to Gentiles, in Eph. ii. 11—22. See also in this Gospel, chap. xiv. 2, 3.)

**Ye shall be free indeed.**—Or, *ye shall be free in reality.*—The word is not the same as that rendered "indeed," in verse 31. They claimed political freedom, but they were in reality the subjects of Rome. They claimed religious freedom, but they were in reality the slaves to the letter. They claimed moral freedom, but they were in reality the bondmen of sin. The freedom which the Son proclaimed was in reality freedom, for it was the freedom of their true life delivered from the thraldom of sin and brought into union with God. For the spirit of man, that in knowledge of the truth revealed through the Son can contemplate the Father and the eternal home, there is a real freedom that no power can restrain. All through this context the thoughts pass unbidden to the teaching of St. Paul, the great apostle of freedom. There could be no fuller illustration of the words than is furnished in his life. He, like St. Peter and St. John (Rom. i. 1, *e.g.*; 2 Pet. i. 1; Rev. i. 1), had learnt to regard himself as a "bondservant," but it was of Christ, "whose service is shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. (37) I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. (38) I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. (39) They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. (40) But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. (41) Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born

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perfect freedom." We feel, as we think of him in bonds before Agrippa, or a prisoner at Rome, that he is more truly free than governor or Cæsar before whom he stands, and more truly free than he himself was when he was armed with authority to bind men and women because they were Christians. The chains that bind the body cannot bind the spirit, whose chains have been loosed. He is free indeed, for the Son has made him free.

(37) **I know that ye are Abraham's seed.**—He uses the word which they had used in verse 33, acknowledging their merely physical descent from Abraham. He has since used the word "Son," but does not apply it to them. In verse 39 He refuses to acknowledge that they are Abraham's "children."

**But ye seek to kill me.**—The difficulty of understanding these words to refer to those who believed on Him (verses 30, 31), have led to the opinion that others of the hierarchy answer in verse 33. This seems unnatural, and is opposed to the words which immediately follow. As a party, they had been, and still were, seeking to kill Him. These believers, by their question in verse 33, were showing the spirit which declined discipleship, were identifying themselves with His opponents.

**Because my word hath no place in you.**—Better, *makes no progress in you,* "does not advance, does not gain ground in you." That meaning is established by undoubted examples, and is in exact agreement with the thought of the context. In verse 31 the test was, "If ye abide in My word." Their question proves that their faith was momentary. The word had but penetrated the surface of their thoughts, but they had not so received it as to allow it to advance into the mind and influence their conduct.

(38) **I speak that which I have seen with my Father.**—Some of the older MSS. read "the" for "My," but without change of sense. For the thought, comp. verse 28, where we have the same connection between doing and speaking. He is the Word, and His work is to speak what He had seen in His eternal existence with the Father.

**And ye do that which ye have seen with your father.**—For "seen," the better reading is probably *heard.* Here, as in the previous clause, some MSS. omit the possessive pronoun with "father," but it is rightly inserted to express the meaning. The clauses are in direct opposition to each other, and this is shown by the emphatic personal pronouns—"I, on My part . . . My Father." "You, on your part . . . your father." The tenses of the verbs, too, are to be distinguished—"That which I have seen" (during My whole existence in eternity). "That which ye heard" (when ye became servants of sin). The cases of the substantives are also different—"I have seen with my Father" (signifying existence with. Comp. chap. i. 1). "Ye heard from your father" (what he directed).

Again, there is a word in the original which it is hard to represent in English, and which our version altogether omits. It is not simply "and ye do," but "and ye therefore, or accordingly, do." It is the same principle of union between Father and Son which directs His work, which is to reveal God, and their work, of which the seeking to kill Him is an instance.

(39) **They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father.**—They feel the meaning which has not yet been expressed (comp. verse 44), and claim the descent from Abraham which He has already allowed (verse 37).

**If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.**—Almost all the better MSS. read, "If ye are," for "If ye were." This must mean, "If ye are Abraham's children—but the supposition is excluded, for ye would do the works of Abraham, and this is opposed to fact." They are the physical seed of the patriarch, but they are not the ethical children, for the true child would bear the moral impress of the father which would be seen in his works. The thought of the previous verse is again present here.

The distinction between "seed" and "children" is another instance of an idea which meets us in this section, and was developed in the writings of St. Paul. (Comp. Rom. ix. 7 *et seq.*)

(40) **But now ye seek to kill me**—*i.e.,* As a matter of fact, in opposition to the conduct which would characterise the true children of Abraham, ye are seeking to kill Me. (Comp. Note on verse 37.)

**A man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard** (better, *which I heard*) **from God.**—The term "a man," expresses His revelation, by means of human form, of the divine truth which He heard in the pre-human state (verse 38). The crime of seeking to kill Him is aggravated by the fact that He was One who came to tell them truth, and that from God. They seek to destroy the human life which for the sake of humanity He has assumed.

**This did not Abraham.**—It is usual to explain these words by a reference to Abraham's receptivity of the divine truth and messengers (see Gen. xii.; xiv.; xviii.; xxii.); but they probably point to the whole course of the patriarchal life as directly opposed to the spirit of those who claim to be his children.

(41) **Ye do the deeds of your father.**—It is better to read *works* rather than "deeds," as in verse 39. They did not the works of Abraham. They did the works of that father, who is now more clearly pointed out, but still not named. Before, when he was referred to (verse 38), they could answer that Abraham was their father; but their works prove that they are not the true children of Abraham (verses 39, 40). They see that a spiritual father is intended, and they will claim God as their Father.

**We be not born of fornication.**—The meaning of this is to be found in the fact that the word became in the Old Testament prophets a frequent symbol for idolatry. (Comp. Isa. i. 21; Jer. ii. 20, and iii. 8, 9; Ezek. xvi.; Hos. i. 2 (especially), ii. 4, and iii. 11.) They, of fornication; we have one Father, *even* God. (42) Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. (43) Why do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word. (44) Ye are of *your* father the devil,[a] and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father

[a] 1 John 3. 8.

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as distinguished from the nations among whom they dwelt, had maintained a pure monotheism, and had never been idolaters, or children born of spiritual fornication.

**We have one Father, even God.**—"We" is strongly emphatic, expressing their pride in the theocracy, and their spiritual superiority to other nations. There may be in this pride also a touch of the scorn with which they asked "Will He go unto the dispersion of the Gentiles?" (chap. vii. 35), or with which they call Him a Samaritan, as they do in this very discussion (verse 48). "Howbeit every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt." This is the historian's account of the spiritual paternity of the Samaritans, and these Jews may well have felt their superiority in contrast with their neighbours. (See the whole passage in 2 Kings xviii. 26—41, especially verses 30, 31.)

(42) **If God were your Father, ye would love me.**—This follows because they would then be in a relationship of spiritual affinity to Him. God's children would bear the spiritual image of their Father, and would love Him who came from God, but they were seeking to kill Him (verse 40).

**I proceeded forth and came from God.**—Better, *am come, am here.* His presence with them was the result of His proceeding from God. As the Son of God He had eternal fellowship with the Father. The Incarnation was not the mission of one whose existence was separate from that of God, but it was the mission of the Son who proceeded from the Father. (Comp. chap. xvi. 27 *et seq.*)

**Neither came I of myself, but he sent me.**—Literally, *for not even of Myself am I come, but He sent Me;* as opposed to the thought that His origin was distinct from the Father. His coming was not His own act, but was a mission from God to the world.

But if He is sent from God, if He is present with them from God, if He proceeded from the Father, it must be that all who are true children of God would recognise and love Him.

It is important to note here that in our Lord's own words there is an assertion of the oneness of nature and of will with that of the Father, and yet the distinction of person is maintained. He is come from God, but He proceeded from the divine essence. He proceeded forth, and yet He was sent.

(43) **Why do ye not understand my speech, . . . my word.**—The distinction between "speech" (the form) and "word" (the matter which was spoken) is rightly preserved. Comp. chap. xii. 48, "the word that I have spoken." A good instance of the meaning of "speech" is found in Matt. xxvi. 73, "thy speech bewrayeth thee." From verse 33 onwards, they had constantly misunderstood His expressions. The reason is that the subject-matter of His discourse is altogether above them. He is speaking of spiritual things, which are spiritually discerned. They, if children of the Father whom they claimed, would recognise these spiritual truths and know the language of home.

**Ye cannot hear.**—Comp. Note on chap. vi. 60. The sense is, "Ye cannot hear, so as to receive and obey." He supplies the answer to His own question. In the following verses (44—47), He expresses this answer more fully.

(44) **Ye are of your father the devil.**—"Ye" is emphatic. "Ye who have claimed Abraham and God as your father. *Ye* are of the father, but that father is the devil." The possessive pronoun (your) is not expressed in the Greek, and the form of the sentence is one which would have required it if it were included in the sense. The father who has been referred to in verses 38 and 41 is now definitely named. The relation between father and son is maintained, but the father of the thoughts and acts of those to whom He speaks was not God, not Abraham, but the devil.

**And the lusts of your father ye will do.**—Better, *ye desire to do, ye will to do.* The verb is not an auxiliary, as it appears to be in our version, but expresses the determination of the will. (Comp. Notes on chaps. v. 40 and vii. 17.)

**He was a murderer from the beginning.**—Comp. Wisd. ii. 23, 24, "For God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of His own eternity. Nevertheless, through envy of the devil came death into the world, and they that do hold of his side do find it." So St. Paul, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Rom. v. 12). The Fall was the murder of the human race; and it is in reference to this, of which the fratricide in the first family was a signal result, that the Tempter is called a murderer from the beginning (see Note on chap. i. 1). "Cain was of that wicked one, and slew his brother." (Comp. Notes on 1 John iii. 8—12, where the thought is expanded.) The reference to the murderer is suggested here by the fact that the Jews had been seeking to kill our Lord (verse 40). They are true to the nature which their father had from the beginning.

**And abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.**—Better, *and standeth not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.* The word is not that which we have before had in the sense of "abide" (see Note on chap. v. 38), and the tense of the verb is present in meaning. The words do not refer to the fall of the devil, which is here implied but not stated, but to his constant character. He has no place in the sphere of the truth; it is not the region of his action and outer life; and the result of this is that there is no truth in the sphere of his thought and inner life. Had he been true, he would have come to stand in the light and life of truth.

**When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own.**—This is in contrast to the work of Christ (verses 28, 40) and to the work of the Holy Spirit (Note on chap. xvi. 13.) The Holy Spirit will not speak of Himself; He came to speak the truth which He heard from God. The devil speaketh a lie (comp. Gen. iii.), and this is of his own (see Note on Matt. xii. 35).

**For he is a liar, and the father of it.**—Better, *and the father of the liar.* This is probably the of it. (45) And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not. (46) Which of you convinceth me of sin? and if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? (47) He that is of God heareth God's words:[a] ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God. (48) Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? (49) Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.

[a] 1 John 4. 6.

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meaning of the Greek, and it can only be expressed in English by the repetition of the substantive. The verse ends as it begins, by a reference to the Jews whom He is addressing. They were of the nature of him whose spiritual children they were. The murderous thoughts in their hearts, and their non-receptivity of truth, plainly indicated who their father was.

The reader will hardly, perhaps, need to be cautioned against the old heretical rendering of the first and last clauses of this verse, by "Ye are of the father of the devil . . . for he is a liar, and also his father." Still, as this view has been revived in some quarters in our own day, one word of reminder that it is no less opposed to the context and the teaching of this Gospel than it is to the whole tenor of Biblical truth and of rational theology, may not be misplaced. On the personality of the devil, which, if plain words have any meaning, is here implied in the words of Christ, see Notes on Matt. iv.

(45) **And because I tell you the truth.**—The pronoun is full of emphatic meaning. And I, as contrary to him, because I tell you the truth, as contrary to the lie which is his characteristic.

**Ye believe me not**—*i.e.*, ye believe not what I say. It does not mean, Ye believe not on Me, but Ye accept not the truth which I speak. There is something startling in this sharp opposition of truth and unbelief. To speak the truth is commonly to command belief. The mind of man is so constituted that truth is the first object of its search. Here was perfect truth presented to men, and they refused to accept it, because it was the truth, and they were themselves children of him who was a liar.

(46) **Which of you convinceth me of sin?**—He appeals to their knowledge of His sinless life, as in verse 29 He asserted His own knowledge of entire conformity to His Father's will. It is an appeal that spotless purity alone could make, and is His own testimony uttered in the dignity of certain knowledge. (Comp. chap. xiv. 30.)

**If I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?**—We may suppose that the last question was probably followed by a pause, during which any one might have answered the challenge. No one of all who had watched Him in Galilee and Judæa dared utter a syllable. Their silence is the seal to His own testimony. But if He is thought of by these as without sin, they cannot think of His words as untrue. They admit, then, that He speaks the truth, and yet they do not believe. On the absolute sinlessness of Christ, comp. 1 John iii. 5; 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 Pet. i. 19; ii. 22.

(47) **He that is of God heareth God's words.**—Again He answers the question which He has Himself asked, and gives more fully the same reason which He gave in verse 43. In verse 44 He asserted that they were of the father the devil, and therefore lived to do the lusts of the devil. In the same way he who is of God does the will of God, and hears the words of God. The words of God are those which He has been speaking unto them (verse 26). Here, then, is the answer to the question, "Why do ye not believe Me?" Rabbis and priests, teachers of the Law, judges of truth, offerers of sacrifice, keepers of feasts, worshippers in synagogues and Temple—they were all this; but they were not "of God."

(48) **Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?**—The words imply that the saying was customary among the Pharisees. The knowledge of this, and the simple way in which the fact is told, is one of many instances of the writer's minute acquaintance with what was said and done by the leaders of the Jerusalem party. There is no instance given of the term "Samaritan" being applied to our Lord, but the term itself is frequently used by the Rabbis as one of opprobrium. The history of the fourth chapter is at once suggested to our minds, and was probably not absent from theirs. (Comp. Note on chap. vii. 35.) There may have been facts more immediately connected with this very Feast of Tabernacles present to their minds, which are unknown to us. The going up secretly of chap. vii. 10, must almost certainly have been through Samaria. He had kept the last Passover in the despised Galilee (chap. vi. 4). Had He kept Tabernacles in the hated Samaria? It is worth noting that the word Samaritan, in the singular, as applied to an individual, occurs but twice, except here and in chap. iv. One instance is in the parable spoken at no long interval after the present discourse (Luke x. 25—37). The other tells us that the only one of the ten lepers who turned back to glorify God "was a Samaritan" (Luke xvii. 16).

The rendering, "and hast a devil," is one which, probably, cannot now be improved. Wiclif's word here is "fiend," which in this sense is obsolete. But every reader of the Greek must feel how little our English word can represent the two distinct ideas, represented by two distinct words here and in verse 44. "Demon," used originally for the lower divinities, and not unfrequently for the gods, passed in the Scriptures, which taught the knowledge of the true God, into the sense of an evil spirit. Thus the word which could represent the attendant genius of Socrates came to express what we speak of as demoniacal possession, and the supposed power of witchcraft and sorcery. Socrates is made to say, "For this reason, therefore, rather than for any other, he calls them demons, because they were prudent and knowing" (*daēmones*, Plato, *Cratylus*, xxiii.). The history of Simon Magus reminds us that the people of Samaria, from the least to the greatest, had been for a long time under the influence of his sorceries (Acts viii. 9 *et seq.*), and it is probable that there is a special connection in the words here, "Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a demon." (Comp. *Excursus III. on Notes to St. Matthew's Gospel*, p. 185.)

(49) **Jesus answered, I have not a devil.**—One of the disciples, who was probably present on this day, and heard these words, speaks of Christ our example, "who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously" (1 Pet. ii. 23). The charge of being a Samaritan He passes over. His words soon after taught that a Samaritan may be more truly the child of God than priest or Levite is. The

(50) And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth. (51) Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. (52) Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. (53) Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself? (54) Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:

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statement that He is possessed by an evil power from the spirit world He denies.

**I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.**—There is a connection between all His works and words and the unseen world. It is the union of Father and Son, and His life had been the constant honouring of the Father, whose will it was His meat to do (chap. iv. 31). Their works and words were as constantly—and this last calumny is an instance of it—dishonouring Him. The contrast suggests that this dishonour was not of Him only; but also of the Father whom He honoured, and whom they claimed as their God.

(50) **And I seek not mine own glory.**—The words are immediately connected with those which have preceded. They dishonoured Him. This to one who sought His own glory would have been matter of concern. For Him whose whole life was one of self-denial, their dishonour finds nothing which it can wound. His words repeat what He had taught them before. (See Notes on chaps. v. 41 and vii. 18.)

**There is one that seeketh and judgeth.**—Comp. chap. v. 45. The thought here is that though He Himself seeks not His own glory, the Father seeketh for the honour of the Son, and judgeth between Him and those who dishonour Him. The result of the judgment as to those who keep not His word is expressed in the next verse; and as to Himself in chap. xvi. 10.

(51) **If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.**—Better, *If a man keep My word.* Our version obscures the close connection with the thought of "continuing in His word" in verse 31; and also that with "He that heareth my word," in chap. v. 24. This last passage is the key to the words before us. Here, as there, the thought of judgment and death leads to the opposite thought of coming not into judgment, but passing out of death into life. Here, as there, the believer is thought of as possessing the true spiritual life which cannot see death, but shall pass into the fuller spiritual life hereafter.

Another interpretation of the phrase rendered "He shall never see death," is "he shall not see death for ever"—*i.e.,* "he shall indeed die, but that death shall only be in this world, it shall not be in the world which is for ever." This is the thought in the collect in "The Order for the Burial of the Dead" . . . "our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the resurrection and the life; in whom whosoever believeth shall live, though he die; and whosoever liveth and believeth in him shall not die eternally."

The following are the only passages in St. John where exactly the same formula is used, and a comparison of them will make it clear that it means, as does the Hebrew formula on which it is based, that which we express by "never," or "certainly never." "by no means ever," for the negative is in its strongest form (chaps. iv. 14, verse 52 in this chap., x. 28, xi. 26, xiii. 8). The first and last of these passages refer to subjects ("shall never think," "shall never wash my feet"), which do not admit any possibility of doubt. The others are all parallel to the present text, in thought as well as in word. In all there is the fuller meaning that for the believer who now has spiritual life, and continues to live in communion with God, there cannot be death. "He shall never see death." What we think of as death is but a sleep. (See Note on chap. xi. 11.) Death has been swallowed up of life, and physical death is thought of, in its true sense, as an entering into life.

(52) **Abraham is dead, and the prophets.**—They still "do not understand His speech," and take His words in a merely physical sense. In that sense they were impossible, for they are contradicted by the fact that death came to the great Patriarch and the prophets, and if to them, then surely, much more to ordinary men. They regard it as conclusive that their assertion in verse 48 is correct. No one, except a man under the influence of a demon, would make an assertion so opposed to the almost unbroken experience of mankind.

**If a man keep my saying.**—Better, *If a man keep My word,* as in last verse.

**He shall never taste of death.**—The expression is stronger than that which He had used, "shall never see death." They use it to put in the strongest way their wonder at the impossible promise which He had uttered. It has occurred before in Matt. xvi. 28. (See Note there.) It occurs again in the New Testament only in Heb. ii. 9.

(53) **Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead?**—The question is exactly the same, with the substitution of "Abraham" for "Jacob," as that asked by the Samaritan woman in chap. iv. 12 (see Note). "Surely thou art not greater than our father Abraham, who indeed died?"

**Whom makest thou thyself?**—"If Abraham, who received God's covenant, himself died, and if the prophets, who uttered the oracles of God, themselves died, what kind of person dost Thou assert Thyself to be that Thy word shall deliver men from death?" The same phrase occurs again in chaps. v. 18, x. 33, xix. 7.

(54) **If I honour myself, my honour is nothing.**—The word rendered "honour" is not the same as that in verse 49. It is better to read *glorify* here. Following all the better MSS. the tense is past. We have then, *If I shall have glorified Myself, My glory is nothing.* Stress is to be laid upon the pronoun. "If *I,* for My part, as distinct from the Father, shall have glorified *Myself.*"

**It is my Father that honoureth me.**—Better, as before, . . . *glorifieth Me.* This is the answer to their question, "Whom makest Thou Thyself?" The attribute of life in Himself, and the power to communicate this to those who kept His word, was the gift of the Father to the Son. (See Note on chap. v. 26.)

**Of whom ye say, that he is your God.**—Some of the better MSS., and most modern editors, read . . . "He is our God." The identification of the Father with the God of Israel is important. It may be, as

(55) yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying. (56) Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw *it*, and was glad. (57) Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? (58) Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. (59) Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple,

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some have supposed, that the phrase, "He is our God," belonged to common liturgical forms or hymns, and was thus frequently on their lips.

(55) **Yet ye have not known him; but I know him.**—The frequency of lip-assertion was not accompanied by any true heart-knowledge. The Father who glorified Him was the God whom they professed to serve. Their question, "Whom makest Thou Thyself?" has its explanation in the fact that this service was independent of any real knowledge of God. The two verbs "know" and "known" here do not represent the same Greek word. More exactly the rendering should be, *And ye have not come to know Him: but I know Him.* The one clause expresses acquired recognition; the other expresses immediate essential knowledge. (Comp. Note on chap. xiv. 7.)

**If I should say, I know him not.**—The thought of their want of perception of God has led to the assertion by contrast of His own full intuitive knowledge of God. To assert this knowledge is to make Himself greater than Abraham and the prophets; but there is untruth in silence as well as in utterance, and His very truthfulness demands the assertion.

**But I know him, and keep his saying.**—Or better, *His word*, as in verses 51, 52. Again the positive statement is made in the certainty of His full knowledge, and this is followed by a statement of the observance of the same condition of communion with the Father which He had made necessary for communion of the disciples with Himself.

(56) **Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day.**—They had asked in scorn if He were greater than their father Abraham (verse 53). His words have shown that He was. He now, with the thoughts of verse 39 still present, contrasts the exultation of him whom they claimed as father, when he saw from afar the Messianic advent, with their rejection of the Messiah who is actually among them. Abraham realised the fulness of the promises made to him, and believed in the Lord that the blessing should be fulfilled to his seed. He, too, had kept God's word, and in the true sense had not seen death (see Gen. xv. 1—6, and xxii. 18). The words, "My day," are used, as in Luke xvii. 22, for the manifestation of Christ on earth.

**And he saw it, and was glad.**—This is the historic fulfilment of the joy which looked forward to the day of Christ. Our Lord reveals here a truth of the unseen world that is beyond human knowledge or explanation. From that world Abraham was cognisant of the fact of the Incarnation, and saw in it the accomplishment of the promise which had brought joy to shepherds watching their flocks, as the Patriarch had watched his; there came an angel, as angels had come to him, and a multitude of the heavenly host, exulting in the good news to men. In that joy Abraham had part. The truth comes as a ray of light across the abyss which separates the saints in heaven from saints on earth. As in the parable, where Lazarus is in Abraham's bosom, the rich man is represented as knowing and caring for his brethren on earth, so here the great Patriarch is spoken of as knowing and rejoicing in the fact of the Incarnation. The faculty of reason cannot explain how it is, but the faculty of faith can receive the truth that there is a "communion of saints," and finds in it a comfort which robs separation of its bitterness, and a power which strengthens all the motives to a holy and devoted life. (Comp. Luke xvi. 19—31; Heb. xii. 1.)

(57) **Thou art not yet fifty years old.**—There is no reason to doubt that we have the correct reading here, though some, from Chrysostom downward, have sought to avoid what seemed to them a difficulty, by substituting "forty" for "fifty." Others, and among them were the "Elders who in Asia conferred with John, the Lord's disciple," have held that our Lord was between forty and fifty years of age at the time of his public ministry. We know this from the testimony of Irenæus, who appears to have this very passage in his mind, for he says, "As the gospel and all the Elders witness" (Lib. ii. chap. xxii. § 5; Oxford Translation, p. 160). But "fifty years" was the period of full manhood (Num. iv. 3, 39; viii. 24). This is expressed in round numbers, and there is no care to be more exact in comparison with the two thousand years which had passed since the close of Abraham's earthly life. The thought is, "Thou art still a young man, and hast thou seen Abraham who died twenty centuries ago?"

(58) **Before Abraham was, I am.**—Better, *Before Abraham was born, I am.* (Comp. Note on chap. i. 6; and see another striking instance in Luke vi. 36, "Become ye merciful as your Father also is merciful.") Here they ask in wonder, not unmixed with scorn, if He was coeval with Abraham. The answer is that Abraham, like all men, came into being. There was a time when he was not. But there was never a time when the Son of God was not. In the time before Abraham, in the eternity before time (chap. i. 1), He still was. No word which expresses becoming can be used of His existence. He is the I AM, present equally in the human "was," and "is," and "is to come."

(59) **Then took they up stones to cast at him.**—At last the meaning of His words flashes upon them. They had heard this I AM before (verse 24) without perceiving that in it He applied to Himself the name Jehovah. Now there is no room for doubt. His own Divinity is the only explanation of what He has said; and it is in these words so plainly asserted, that those who had constantly misunderstood can misunderstand no more. The subtleties of later days, by which men have tried to show that there is no claim to Divinity here, was not suggested to their minds. They will not acknowledge the claim, but they feel that He has made it. They have heard the fearful words which seemed to them as blasphemy, and they take up the stones which are at hand for the rebuilding of the Temple, in which they are, to cast at the Lord of the Temple. (Comp. chap. x. 33.)

**Going through the midst of them, and so passed by.**—These words are omitted in a majority of the better MSS. They were probably inserted in going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

A.D. 32.

CHAPTER IX. — (1) And as *Jesus* passed by, he saw a man which was blind from *his* birth. (2) And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? (3) Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his

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others to explain what was taken to be the miraculous disappearance. (Comp. Luke iv. 30.) Here we are simply told that He "hid Himself and went out of the Temple, and this does not imply more than that He passed among the crowd which was around Him, out of the Temple, and thus avoided the stones which they had taken up to cast at Him.

IX.

[(*b*) *Jesus is Light* (continued).
(δ) Physical light given to the man born blind (chap. ix. 1—42):
The miracle itself (verses 1—12).
The objections of the Pharisees, and the witness of the sufferer (verses 13—34.)
Physical light and darkness; spiritual light and darkness (verses 35—41).]

(1) **And as Jesus passed by.**—Better, *And as He was passing by.* The words are immediately connected with those of the preceding verse, "and went out of the Temple." It was then, as He was leaving the Temple to escape the fury of His enemies who had taken up stones to cast at Him, and was passing by the place where the blind man was, that His eye fell upon him. The day was the Sabbath of the preceding discourse, now drawing to its close. (Comp. verses 4 and 14, and chap. viii. 12.) The place was probably some spot near the Temple, perhaps one of its gates. We know that beggars were placed near these gates to ask alms (Acts iii. 2), and this man was well known as one who sat and begged (verse 8).

**A man which was blind from his birth.**—The fact was well known, and was probably publicly proclaimed by the man himself or his parents (verse 20) as an aggravation of his misery, and as a plea for the alms of passers by. Of the six miracles connected with blindness which are recorded in the Gospels, this is the only case described as blindness from birth. In this lies its special characteristic, for "since the world began, was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind" (verse 32).

(2) **Who did sin, this man, or his parents?**—The disciples noticed that He looked at the man, and it may be that He halted as He was walking by. Their attention is directed to the sufferer, and with suffering they connect the idea of sin. They ask a question which may have come to them many times before, and which has in various forms come to men's hearts many times since. Some of them may have heard it discussed in Rabbinic schools, and may have wished to know what answer He whom they had come to regard as greater than the Rabbis, would give. But it is a question not of the learned only, but of men generally, and those who now ask it do not propound it as a matter for discussion, but as a mystery of human life brought home to them in all its darkness, and for which they seek a solution at His hands. His teaching on the wider questions of the existence of evil and the connection of sin and suffering, though coming in the order of events after these words, and in part probably arising out of them, has in the order of the record occurred before them, and has been already dealt with in Notes on Luke xiii. 1—5. What is special to the question, as it meets us here, is that what is deemed to be the punishment had come with birth before possibility of thought or action, and therefore, as we think, before possibility of sin.

The form of the question puts two alternatives on precisely the same grounds; and we have no right therefore to assume that one of them is excluded by the questioners themselves. The fact of sin is stated as beyond question. The problem is, "Was the sin that of the man himself, or that of his parents?" The latter alternative is familiar to us, and daily experience shows us that within limits it holds good in both the moral and the physical worlds. It was clearly taught in the Second Commandment, and there is abundant evidence that the belief was at this time widely spread. We have greater difficulty in tracing the origin of the former alternative. It is not easy to accept the view that they thought of sin in his mother's womb, though it seems certain that the Jews currently interpreted such passages as Gen. xxv. 22, and Ps. li. 7 in this sense. That a more or less definite belief in the transmigration of souls was common among Jews at the time of our Lord's ministry, is made probable by references in Philo and Josephus. We know it was a doctrine of the Essenes and of the Cabbala; and we find it in the nearly contemporary words of the Wisdom of Solomon, "Yea rather being good, I came into a body undefiled" (viii. 20). Still it has been urged that it is not likely that such a belief would have made its way among the fishermen of Galilee. We have to remember, however, that among the disciples there are now men of Jerusalem as well as of Galilee, and that questions which men found hard to understand were constantly being raised and answered in the Rabbinic schools. In the meetings of the yearly festivals the answers of great Rabbis would be talked over and become generally known, and be handed on as maxims to those who knew little of the principle on which they were based. It was, then, probably with some thought that the life in this maimed body may not have been the first stage of his existence, that they ask, Did this man sin?

(3) **Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents.**—The answer is, of course, to be understood with the limitation of the question, "that he was born blind." Neither his special sin nor theirs was the cause of the blindness. Our version does not give quite accurately the form of the answer. It should be, *Neither did this man sin, nor his parents.* Their question sought to establish a connection between the suffering and some definite act of sin. The answer asserts that no such connection exists, and our Lord's words remain a warning against the spirit of judging other men's lives, and tracing in the misfortunes and sorrows which they have to bear the results of individual sin or the proof of divine displeasure. There is a chain connecting the sin of humanity and its woe, but the links are not traceable by the human eye. In the Providence of God vicarious suffering is often the noble lot of the noblest members of our race. No burden of human sorrow was ever so great as that borne by Him who knew no human sin.

parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. (4) I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. (5) As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.[a] (6) When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,[1]

[a] ch. 1. 9.

[1] Or, *spread the clay upon the eyes of the blind man.*

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**But that the works of God should be made manifest in him.**—They had sought to trace back the result of sin which they saw before them to a definite cause. He will trace it back to the region of the divine counsel, where purpose and result are one. Evil cannot be resolved into a higher good: it is the result of the choice exercised by freedom, and without freedom goodness could not be virtue. Permitted by God, it is yet overruled by Him. It has borne its fearful fruit in the death and curse of humanity, but its works have led to the manifestation of the works of God in the divine plan of redemption. It is so in this instance. The blindness of this beggar will have its result, and therefore in the divine counsel had its purpose, in the light which will dawn upon the spiritual as well as upon the physical blindness, and from him will dawn upon the world.

(4) **I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day.**—The better reading is probably that which has *we,* instead of "I," and perhaps also that which has *us,* instead of "me"; but this latter change is not so well supported by MS. authority. The clause would read then, *We must work the works of Him that sent Me* (or *us*) *while it is day.* He identifies the disciples with Himself in the redemptive work of His mission. There is before them a striking instance of the power of evil. He and they are there to manifest the power of good. They must gird themselves to the task. If we are right in placing the whole section from chaps. vii. 37—x. 21 on the same great day of the Feast (comp. Note on verse 14), then this work must have come near the close of the day. The sun sinking to the west may have reminded them that the day was passing away, and that the night was approaching. He was reminded of the day of life, and the night of death. He will not be long in the world (verse 5). That night will be the close of His human work, and the shadows of evening are already falling upon Him.

**The night cometh, when no man can work.**—He does not except even Himself from the proverbial law. The day of opportunity passes, never to return. His own great work of doing the work of Him that sent Him, could only be done when that day was present. It has, of course, been ever done in the work of His church under the guidance of His Spirit; but the work of His own human activity on earth ceased when the night came. Comp. chap. xi. 9 for this thought of the hours of the day.

(5) **As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.**—Better, *when I am in the world.* The thought is that the two things necessarily co-exist. He is the true Light, and this true Light cannot be in the world without shining in its darkness. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 5.) The thought is here closely connected with His teaching in the Temple but a short time before (chap. viii. 12, "I am the Light of the world"), and also with the removal of physical and spiritual darkness which immediately followed.

(6) **And he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.**—The words "blind man" are omitted in some of the older MSS. The marginal rendering, *and He spread the clay upon the eyes of the blind man* (or, *upon his eyes*), is to be preferred.

The details given in this and the next verse are evidently to be regarded as part of the sign. They impressed themselves as such upon the eye-witnesses, and they have been recorded as such for us. We have then to seek their interpretation. At the outset we are met by the undoubted fact that our Lord here made use of means which, in part at least, were natural, and found their place in the ordinary prescriptions of the day. We know from the pages of Pliny, and Tacitus, and Suetonius, that the *saliva jejuna* was held to be a remedy in cases of blindness, and that the same remedy was used by the Jews is established by the writings of the Rabbis. That clay was so used is not equally certain, but this may be regarded as the vehicle by means of which the saliva was applied. Here, then, as elsewhere, we may recognise the Divine manifested by means of the human, and see the ordinary remedy of every-day life blessed to meet a case that was beyond human power. Physicians had applied such means commonly to cases of post-natal blindness, but congenital blindness had always been regarded as incurable, and no instance to the contrary had ever been heard of (verse 32). The Great Physician, then, by using the ordinary means, will teach men that the healing powers of nature are His gracious gift, and that they are increased at the Giver's will. Our daily sustenance in health and strength, our restored power after sickness or accident, the whole of ordinary life, which we too commonly connect only with ordinary means, is lifted to the higher region of union with Him in whom we live, and move, and have our being.

Another interpretation sees in the use of clay a symbolism which is to be traced to the first Creation, when man was formed from the dust of the earth. We find this as early as Irenæus, and it may well, therefore, represent an oral explanation, going back to the days of the Evangelist himself. The thought would be that our Lord will here exercise the same creative power as that which made man, and will complete, by the gift of sight, this man, who had hitherto been maimed and without the chief organ of sense.

The use of means by which the healing power is conveyed is common to this instance with that of the blind man at Bethsaida (Mark viii. 22—26), and that of the deaf and dumb man in Decapolis (Mark vii. 32—37); while the two blind men in the house (Matt. ix. 27—31), and the two blind men at Jericho (Matt. xx. 29—34), are touched and receive their sight. The reader is referred to the Notes on these passages of St. Matthew and St. Mark. Here it will be enough to observe that in each case the loss of a channel of communication between the individual man and the outer world is compensated by some special means which may help to assure him of the presence of the true Healer, and may furnish a foundation for his faith and hope. The deaf man cannot hear the tones of a voice that tells of mercy and love, but the touch applied to the ear may in part convey the same gracious truths. The blind man cannot see the look of compassion which others can see, but the saliva or the clay applied to the eye gives force to the word which is heard by the ear. In every case we should remember that the means is chiefly moral, preparing in the sufferer a mental condition which can

(7) And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

(8) The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged? (9) Some said, This is he: others *said*, He is like him: *but* he said, I am *he*. (10) Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened? (11) He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the

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receive the gift of healing, and that the physical gift is itself regarded as a stage in the spiritual education. The wisest physicians of the body, and the wisest physicians of the soul, have alike sought to follow in the steps of Him who is their common Master. There are conditions of physical disease for which the truest medicines would be faith, and love, and hope—a mind at peace with itself and with God. There are morbid states of spiritual life that have their cause in physical derangement, and would find their truest remedy in the healthy tone of a restored and vigorous body.

(7) **Go, wash in the pool of Siloam.**—Comp. Notes on chap. v. 2 ("Bethesda"), and on Luke xiii. 4 ("the tower in Siloam"). The locality is almost without doubt that now known by the Arabic form of the same name, the *Birket Silwân*, which is in the lower Tyropæon valley, between the Temple mountain and Mount Zion. It is about a quarter of a mile from the present city wall, but in the time of our Lord the wall extended up to it (Jos. *Wars*, v. 4, § 1; so the *Antonine Itinerary* in the fourth century). The place is frequently mentioned by Josephus, and there is every reason to believe that in the present pool we have the Siloah of Neh. iii. 15, the Shiloah of Isa. viii. 6, and the Siloam of the present passage. The form of the word here used by St. John is that found in the Greek translation of both the Old Testament passages.

The words "wash in" mean literally, *wash into*, that is, "wash so that the clay from the eyes will pass into the tank."

The attempt to show that in the waters of Siloam, too, we have an ordinary remedial agent, must be abandoned, at least as far as regards blindness. The command recalls that to Naaman the Syrian (2 Kings v. 10), and not improbably recalled it to the mind of the blind man. In any case, it is a further stage in his spiritual education. It is a demand on the faith which realises the presence of the Power to heal. The place is chosen, perhaps, as a well-known spot, or as one at some little distance, so as to afford time for reflection and a test for obedience. It may be, however, that there is another reason for the choice. The pool of Siloam was bound up with all the religious feelings of the Feast of Tabernacles. A solemn procession went each morning to it, and carried water from it to the Temple. That water had already led to the teaching of the gift of the Spirit to every man who should receive the Messiah (see Notes on chap. vii. 37 *et seq.*), uttered, perhaps, on this very day (comp. verse 1). There would be attached, then, to the pool of Siloam a sacred significance that would be in itself a help to faith.

**Which is by interpretation, Sent.**—St. John sees a significance even in the name. The sending of the waters of this intermittent spring had given it the name Siloam. Popular belief connected the moving of the waters with the presence of an angel who gave them their healing virtue. There was One then present who was the source of all life and power to heal, and He was Himself the sent of God. So He had taught men in words which had fixed themselves on St. John's mind (chaps. iii. 17, 34; v. 36, 38; vii. 29; viii. 42). So the prophet Isaiah had spoken of His work (chap. lxi. 1), and He had quoted that prophecy of His own work with the remarkable addition from the LXX., "and recovering of sight to the blind." (Comp. Notes on Matt. xi. 5, Luke iv. 18; and Isa. xlii. 7.) So He was later called "the Apostle (the One sent) of our profession (Heb. iii. 1).

**And came seeing.**—These words need no Note for the reader who will pause to think of them, but we often pass over them without remembering that a whole world of visual objects now first burst upon the mind of him who was healed. We can only know in part what a revelation this was, but we may by thought realise it in some degree. There is no reference to his coming again to our Lord. He returned apparently to his usual dwelling, and this agrees with the mention of "neighbours" in the following verse.

(8) **They which before had seen him that he was blind.**—The better reading is, *that he was a beggar*. The persons are the neighbours, who from living near him knew all about him, and those who used to see him at the spot where he sat begging. Both classes, of course, knew that he was blind.

**Is not this he that sat and begged?**—Better, *Is not this he that sitteth and beggeth?* The tenses are present, marking his usual custom.

(9) **He is like him.**—The more probable reading is, *No; but he is like him.* It is not that these speakers agree with some hesitation with those who assert the identity. They oppose to it their own opinion, that it is a case of resemblance only. He himself sets the question at rest by declaring that he is the same person.

The verse, and indeed the whole narrative, is one of the many striking instances of the natural form which is taken by the narrative of one personally acquainted with all the facts. We may suppose that St. John recorded this from the lips of the man himself. We can still see the whole picture;—the man returning, observed by one or two neighbours, who spread the story; the excitement of their curiosity; the question whether he is really the same; some struck by the points of identity in the features, and declaring that he is; others struck by the features of the opened eyes lighting up the whole face, and declaring that he is not; the simple declaration of the man himself, which is at once accepted as decisive—all this passes before us just as it occurred.

(10) **How were thine eyes opened?**—They wonder at the change wrought in him, and seek to know how it happened. The question is important if we adopt the better reading, *beggar*, for "blind," in verse 8, as showing that they knew he had been blind, the moment they knew that he was the same person who used to sit and beg.

(11) **A man that is called Jesus.**—Some of the better MSS. read, "*The* Man that is called Jesus," implying that He would be known to the blind man and his friends. They can hardly have failed to hear of His teaching at the feast.

pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. (12) Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.

(13) They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind. (14) And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. (15) Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see. (16) Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them. (17) They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes?

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**Made clay, and anointed mine eyes.**—He gives the details in order, omitting the spitting on the ground, which he had not seen.

**And I received sight.**—The Greek word means exactly, "to see again." The power, though given in this instance for the first time, was usually a restored power, and this is expressed in the word. This man uses the ordinary language of men, though, in strictness it was not applicable to his own case. This use of the word is, moreover, justified by other examples.

(12) **I know not.**—He had not returned to our Lord (verse 7), who was passing by when He spoke to him (verse 1), and by the time the man had gone to the pool and had returned would have gone beyond his knowledge.

(13) **They brought to the Pharisees.**—More exactly, *They bring* . . . The present tense speaks of what they did, as the writer thinks of it in actual occurrence. Their question in the previous verse, and the fact stated in the following verse, seem to indicate that they did this in the spirit of opposition to our Lord. They may have been influenced also, as the parents were, by the agreement of the Jews to excommunicate any who should confess Christ (verse 22). By the term, "to the Pharisees," we are not to understand the Sanhedrin, which did not meet on the Sabbath, and which is not spoken of by St. John as simply "the Pharisees," but a body of the leading Pharisees who were the most bitter foes of Christ, and who seem at this time to have formed practically a permanent committee of the Sanhedrin, always ready to take counsel or action against Him. (Comp. Notes on chap. vii. 32, 45, 48.)

(14) **And it was the sabbath day**—*i.e.*, most probably, the last day, that great day of the feast of chap. vii. 37. Nothing has taken place which makes it necessary to suppose any interval, and though the discourses seem long, they would have occupied but a short time in delivery. The whole narrative follows in unbroken order, which makes it difficult to suppose that a week intervened.

**When Jesus made the clay.**—This is mentioned as a servile work which contravened the Sabbath law. The anointing the eyes with spittle on the Sabbath was specially forbidden by the decrees of the Rabbis. They held that no work of healing might be performed on the Sabbath except in cases of immediate danger.

On the question of our Lord's relation to the Sabbath day, comp. Notes on chap. v. 16 *et seq.*, and on Matt. xii. 10; Luke xiii. 11—16, and xiv. 1—5.

(15) **Then again the Pharisees also asked.**—As the neighbours and acquaintances had done before (verse 10).

**He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes.**—The answer is the same as before, but briefer. It is that of a man who is answering against his will (comp. verse 27) and does not care to say more than he is obliged to.

**And do see.**—This differs from "I received sight" (verse 11). He now speaks as in conscious possession of the power to see. (Comp. verse 25.)

(16) **This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day.**—See Note on verse 14, and reference there. Here the truth of the miracle is granted, but it is urged that the power by which it is wrought cannot be of God, because it was exercised on the Sabbath day. The inference is, that it was done by the influence of the power of evil.

**Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?**—This question is asked by the better party among the Pharisees, represented, as we know, by Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa, and perhaps by Gamaliel. They see the inference implied in the earlier question, and appeal to the nature of the miracles wrought. Works of mercy, and love, and power, were not the product of a life of sin, or of communion with the powers of darkness. We find evidence of this better spirit among the Pharisees before, in the question of Nicodemus (chap. vii. 21). It has now extended to others. The teaching on the earlier work on the Sabbath (chap. v.) has led some among them, at least, to look with allowance upon this.

**And there was a division among them.**—Comp. Note on chap. vii. 40.

(17) **They say unto the blind man again.**—The question is not asked by either of the parties, for this must have been noted, but by the assembly generally. They who questioned him in verse 15, question him again now. They have differed among themselves, and they ask what impression the fact of the miracle had left upon him who was the object of it, with regard to the person of Him who had performed it.

**What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes?**—Stress is laid on the pronoun. What sayest *thou?* He ought to know better than any one, seeing that his eyes had been opened, and this they admit, while the nature of his witness is uncertain; but immediately that is given they disbelieve the fact of the miracle, and soon reject with scorn him they question now (verse 34).

The English reader should observe the punctuation here, which rightly makes the question one. It is sometimes read as though it were, "What sayest thou of Him? that He hath opened thine eyes?" It is not, however, the fact which is here questioned, but the opinion of the man, based upon the fact, for the present assumed as true, which is called for.

**He is a prophet.**—The education of the man has been doing its work, and he is convinced that the power which has healed him is direct from God, and that the person who has exercised it is a messenger from God. His words are uttered in the brevity and calmness of clear conviction, and they are the direct negative to the

He said, He is a prophet. (18) But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. (19) And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see? (20) His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: (21) but by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself. (22) These *words* spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. (23) Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him. (24) Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a

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statement of the Pharisees, "This man is not from God." (Comp chaps. iii. 2, iv. 19, vi. 14.) It is important to note, that even in the language of the ordinary people, the word "prophet" did not mean simply a predictor of events in the future, but one who was as the representative of God. He was not only or chiefly a "fore-teller," but a "forth-teller," declaring God's truth, revealing His will and character, bearing the witness of divine works; but as the future is ever present to the divine counsels, prophecy, in the narrower sense, may be part of the work of the true prophet.

(18) **But the Jews did not believe.**—Better, *The Jews therefore did not believe.* The words are connected, as an inference, with those which precede. Because of this explanation of the fact, they are driven to the expedient of disbelieving the fact itself. The designation of those who take this position is remarkable. The substantive is not unexpressed, as in verse 17, nor is it "the Pharisees," as in verse 16, but it is the term which we have met with again and again, as marking out the leaders of the Jerusalem party who were opposed to Christ. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 19.)

**Until they called the parents.**—After they have done so, they can affect to doubt the fact no longer (verse 26). But they hoped that the parents would from fear (verse 22) have given an answer which would have enabled them to deny the identity of person, or the fact of congenital blindness.

(19) **Is this your son, who ye say was born blind?**—The "ye" is emphatic; *ye* say he was born blind, as opposed to us, for we do not believe it. There are three questions. Is this your son? Do ye still say that he was born blind? which is incredible, as he now possesses the faculty of sight (verse 32). If you do, how do you account for the fact that he now sees?

**How then doth he now see?**—Their question means—"How does it come to pass, since he was born blind, that he all at once seeth?" The word rendered "now," here and in verses 21 and 25, conveys the idea of the suddenness of the change which had taken place.

(20) **We know that this is our son . . .**—The two earlier questions of matter of fact they can answer with certainty. They know, as none besides themselves can know, that he was their son, and they know the painful truth that he was born blind.

(21) **But by what means he now seeth.**—Better, *but how he now seeth.* The answer is in the exact words of the question, which is not seen in our version. They will not pass beyond the plain matters of fact of which they were certain.

**Or who hath opened his eyes.**—They pass here to a fourth question, which was not asked, but which they see to be the real point which the Pharisees are aiming at, and in which they have determined not to be entangled.

**He is of age, ask him.**—The better reading here is probably that which places "ask him" first; *ask him, he is of age.* The Received text has been influenced by verse 23. The Greek expresses with the fullest emphasis, which it is not easy to preserve in English, that they intend to have nothing to do with this third question, but to leave it to their son to answer. Literally, it is, *Ask him; he is of full age; he himself will speak concerning himself.*

(22) **For the Jews had agreed already.**—This does not imply a formal decree of the Sanhedrin, but an agreement on the part of the leaders which they had made known to the people, and which they would have had little difficulty in carrying into effect. The word rendered "agreed" occurs again in the New Testament only twice. It expresses the covenant made with Judas, in Luke xxii. 5, and the agreement of the Jews to kill Paul, in Acts xxiii. 20.

**He should be put out of the synagogue.**—Comp. chap. xvi. 2, and Note on Luke vi. 22. The Jews at a later date distinguished three kinds of excommunication. (1) The lightest continued for thirty days, and prescribed four cubits as a distance within which the person may not approach any one, not even wife or children; with this limitation, it did not make exclusion from the synagogue necessary. (2) The severer included absolute banishment from all religious meetings, and absolute giving up of intercourse with all persons, and was formally pronounced with curses. (3) The severest was a perpetual banishment from all meetings, and a practical exclusion from the fellowship of God's people. It has been sometimes supposed that the words of Luke vi. 22, (*a*) "separate you," (*b*) "reproach you," (*c*) "cast out your name," refer to these gradations, but probably the only practice known in the time of our Lord was that which was later regarded as the intermediate form, falling short of perpetual banishment, but being, while the ban lasted, exclusion from all the cherished privileges of an Israelite.

(23) See Note on verse 21.

(24) **Then again called they the man that was blind.**—He had not been present during the interview with his parents. They now wish him to believe that they have ascertained from his parents either that he was not their son, or that he was not really born blind. It is useless for him, therefore, to persist in his belief that a prophet had given him the power to see.

**Give God the praise.**—Better, *Give glory to God.* This phrase is very generally misunderstood, though almost all competent authorities are agreed as to its sinner. (25) He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner *or no,* I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. (26) Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes? (27) He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear *it* again? will ye also be his disciples? (28) Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. (29) We know that God spake unto Moses: *as for* this *fellow,* we know not from

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true meaning. It is not "Give God the praise for your cure, instead of this Man, who is a sinner. Trace the gift to its true source, and give glory to the true Giver." This is wholly opposed to the context, for they are assuming that no cure has really taken place. The phrase is rather an adjuration calling upon the man to speak, as in God's presence, and confess the whole truth. (Comp. the words of Joshua to Achan, "My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto Him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me," Josh. vii. 19. Comp. also 1 Sam. vi. 5; Jer. xiii. 16; 1 Esdr. ix. 8; Rev. xvi. 9.)

**We know that this man is a sinner.**—Some of them had said before that He was not from God, while others had felt that such miracles were inconsistent with the belief that He was a sinner. The man himself had declared his simple conviction that He was a prophet (verses 16 and 17). They now assert, with the emphasis of an authority which is beyond question, that they know Him to be a sinner.

(25) **Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not.**—The words, "or no," are added to the text, but rightly complete the meaning. He, like his parents, will confine himself to matters of fact coming under his own certain knowledge. They had declared authoritatively that they knew this Man to be one whose life was characterised by sin. He is convinced that this cannot be so (verses 31, 33), but he does not dispute their assertion; he simply makes his own, which cannot be gainsaid, and which cuts the ground from under them.

**One thing I know.**—For this use of "one thing" to mark the chief thing which is so important that all others are excluded, and it is left as the only one in the mind, comp. Mark x. 21 ("one thing thou lackest") and Luke x. 42 ("one thing is needful").

**Whereas I was blind, now I see.**—Better, *Being a blind man, now I see.* He places the two things in contrast. He was the well-known "blind man," whose experience of his own blindness had extended from birth to manhood. They declare that he has not been healed. He is conscious of his power to see, and this one thing he affirms. The difficulty is of their making; let them explain it as they think best.

(26) **Then said they to him again.**—Failing to establish their denial of the fact, they repeat their questionings as to the means used. They hope, it may be, to detect some difference in the accounts, or something which they can construe into a charge against our Lord; or, perhaps, as some have suggested, their repeated questions are merely to gain time or cover their retreat. His honest boldness is too much for their craft. Their adjuration to speak as in God's presence has been answered in a way they little expected, and the questions they now repeat are asked because they know not what to say.

(27) **I have told you already, and ye did not hear.**—The man becomes weary of this cross-questioning, the purpose of which is sufficiently clear to him. His first answer was in the fewest possible words (verse 15, compared with verse 7), and even these he will not repeat. There is some difficulty about the meaning of the word "hear" in the two clauses of this verse. When the man says "Ye did not hear," we naturally understand "did not heed;" but when he goes on to say, "Wherefore would ye hear it again?" the word clearly has its ordinary sense of hearing. The same word occurs in the two clauses in the Greek, just as it does in the English, and we are scarcely justified in giving it two distinct meanings. If we were to read both clauses as questions, we should avoid this difficulty, and get a sense which would suit the evident feeling of the man. He is impatient, and expresses this in a series of rapid questions. "I have told you already, and did ye not hear? wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be His disciples?"

**Will ye also be his disciples?**—The words refer, probably, to some who are His disciples, not to the man himself as being, or being ready to become, a disciple. This is a further stage of his spiritual education which is to follow, but has not yet arrived (verses 35—38). The man must have known of the existence of a band of disciples, who indeed in his presence had questioned their Master concerning him (verse 2), and it is not unlikely that while the parents were being questioned, the son may have learnt more concerning the work of Christ. The question puts the irony in the severest form, "Surely *ye* also do not wish to become His disciples?" It may have been designed, or may only have been as an arrow drawn at a venture; but there must have been among those of whom it was asked, men who tried in vain to encase themselves in the armour of authority, which would repel his shaft and silence him. It must have gone through the joints of the harness and pierced to the hearts of men like Nicodemus, who were half-disciples without the "courage of their convictions." Here was the blind beggar making an open avowal of that which the Pharisees and rulers dared only to confess by night (chap. iii. 2).

(28) **Then they reviled him.**—The Greek word occurs only here in the Gospels. The other passages where it occurs in the New Testament are Acts xxiii. 4, 1 Cor. iv. 12, and 1 Pet. ii. 23. It expresses the passionate outburst of their anger, which was excited by his question, and finds vent in heaping reproaches upon him.

**Thou art his disciple.**—They cast his own reproach back upon himself, but in stronger words than he had used they mark out the distinction between Jesus and themselves. *Thou art that Man's disciple.*

**But we are Moses' disciples.**—The emphasis of the words is important. *We,* as opposed to *thou; Moses,* as opposed to *that Man's.*

(29) **We know that God spake unto Moses.**—Better, *We know that God hath spoken unto Moses.* "He was commissioned," they would say, "by God, and received a revelation from God which remains to us." They would press here, as before, the authority of the great Lawgiver, which to every Israelite was

whence he is. (30) The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and *yet* he hath opened mine eyes. (31) Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. (32) Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. (33) If this man were not of God, he could do nothing. (34) They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and

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final. They will not, therefore, accept this Man as a prophet. Their words have tacit reference also to the fact that His works were in their eyes a transgression of the Mosaic law. There is an opposition between them. Both cannot be right, and they will themselves continue to be disciples of Moses. He, it is implied, by confessing Jesus to be a prophet, was practically denying the authority of Moses.

**As for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.**—In our English version the words in italics are added, but they do not express more than the single Greek word, which is used with contempt. Before they had said, "Howbeit we know this Man whence He is; but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence He is" (chap. vii. 27; see Notes on this and the next verse). They here oppose the divine authority of the mission of Moses, which was acknowledged by all, to the absence, as they would say, of any such authority for the work of Jesus. Their words are meant to convey more than they express, coming as they do in sharp contrast with "God spake unto Moses." They would say again, "This Man is not of God" (verse 16), "we know that this Man is a sinner" (verse 24). For the expression, "whence He is," *i.e.*, "what authority He has," comp. chap. xix. 9, and Matt. xxi. 25.

(30) **Why herein is a marvellous thing.**—Several of the better MSS. read more emphatically, *the marvellous thing.* He again puts two contradictory positions—their assertion that they knew not by what authority Jesus did these things (whence He was), and the evident fact that He had opened his eyes. He cannot reconcile their statement with what he knows to be true, and he states his wonder in the strongest form.

**That ye know not from whence he is**—*i.e.*, ye whose business it is to know, ye who claim for yourselves a special knowledge of all such questions, and whose duty it is to inquire into the authority of any one who asserts that he is a teacher or a prophet. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 24.)

(31) **Now we know that God heareth not sinners.**—What they should have known, but asserted that they did not, he proceeds to declare. The argument of this and the two following verses may be stated in syllogistic form, thus:—(1) God heareth not sinners, but only those who worship Him and do His will. (2) That God heareth this Man is certain, for such a miracle could be performed only by divine power. (3) This Man, therefore, is not a sinner, but is from God.

He assumes as a general truth, which all accepted, that God heareth not sinners. This is based upon numerous passages in the Old Testament Scriptures—*e.g.*, Isa. i. 11—15; Pss. lxvi. 18, and cix. 7; Prov. xv. 8, 29; Job xxvii. 9, and xxxv. 13. We are, of course, to understand the word "sinner" in the sense in which they had used it in verses 16 and 24. They had said that they knew this Man to be a sinner, and they meant one who was a sinner in a darker sense than that in which the word may be applied to all men. He asserts, as a truth which agrees with the whole teaching of the Old Testament, and with all the religious instincts of men, that there would be no communion between such a man and heaven. Such a one could not be commissioned as a prophet, or so heard in heaven as to have power to work miracles on earth. (Comp. Notes on chap. xi. 41, 42, and Acts iii. 12.) Men have sometimes taken the words altogether apart from their context, and read into them a dark meaning which they cannot be rightly made to bear. Neither these words, nor any words of God, assign any limit to the divine grace, which extendeth to every penitent sinner; nor is there any voice of any child of man lifted to heaven, which is not heard by the Father who is in heaven.

It has often been noted here that the words are spoken by one whose authority does not make them binding upon us; but it is clear that they were accepted as a general truth. We need no other explanation if we bear in mind the special sense which is here attached to the word "sinner."

(32) **Since the world began was it not heard.**—Literally, *from the world-age was it not heard.* The phrase is a reminiscence of Isa. lxiv. 4. (Comp. also Note on Luke i. 70.)

**The eyes of one that was born blind.**—This differentiates the miracle from the others in cases of blindness, and still more from all ordinary cures of maladies of the eyes. The man expresses what was simply true, that no science or skill had at that time been equal to the removal of blindness which had accompanied birth. That modern science has succeeded in making even this possible, is altogether beside the question, unless it is pretended that human skill could effect it under like conditions and with the same means. For the man himself there had been years of darkness without a ray of hope, for none had ever dreamt that recovery was within the limits of possibility; and now that the blessing has come, he regards it as the gift of God, and doubts not that the immediate giver is from God.

(33) **If this man were not of God.**—His argument meets each of their assertions. His general assumption, admitted as a universal truth (verse 31), had denied their assertion that this Man was a sinner. His conclusion now denies their assertion, "This Man is not of God" (verse 16).

**He could do nothing**—*i.e.*, nothing of this kind, no miracle such as this, much less this miracle itself.

(34) **Thou wast altogether born in sins.**—Their reproach now takes the most malignant form, and shrinks not from casting in his teeth the calamity of his birth as the mark of special sin. "Thou didst come into the world," these words mean, "bearing the curse of God upon thy face. Thou hast said that God heareth not sinners. Thy life in its first moments bore the marks of some fearful crime."

**And dost thou teach us?**—*i.e.*, "Dost *thou*, marked more than is the common lot of man by sin, teach *us*, who are the authorised teachers and expositors dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.[1] (35) Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? (36) He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? (37) And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. (38) And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

(39) And Jesus said, For judgment I

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[1] Or, *excommunicated him.*

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of the truth?" For any one to have doubted their authority would have seemed out of question; but here was one who had been a beggar, one of the "people of the earth," untrained in the Law, and therefore cursed (comp. Note on chap. vii. 49), and, more than this, altogether born in sin, who was actually teaching them!

**And they cast him out.**—These words are generally taken to mean excommunication, as in the margin, and it is certain that they may have this sense. (Comp. 3 John 10.) Having this meaning before them, our translators did not, however, think it the better one, and their view seems to be borne out by the general impression which we get from the narrative. The man with all his boldness has not technically fallen under the ban they had threatened, for he has not "confessed that He was Christ" (verse 22). A decree of the Sanhedrin would have been necessary, and this must have been formally pronounced. Now, we feel that in a detailed narrative such as we have here, all this would hardly be told in a single short sentence. It seems to be rather that their anger has now passed all bounds. They cannot refute the truth which, in his honest, homely way, he has put before them. They can only heap reproaches upon him, and thrust him by force out of their presence.

(35) **Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him.**—There is no hint of time or place. We may naturally suppose that this seeking and finding on the part of our Lord followed immediately on the expulsion by the Pharisees. His parents had, for fear of the Pharisees, forsaken him; and they who should have been as the shepherd of this sheep of the flock of Israel, had thrust him from them; but in his case, too, the words of the Psalmist were to be fulfilled, "When my father and my mother forsake me, the Lord taketh me up." The Good Shepherd, who gathereth the lambs with His arm, and carrieth them in His bosom, is at hand to lead him.

**Dost thou believe on the Son of God?**—There is much doubt about the true reading here. A majority of the best MSS. have "the Son of Man," which is the usual term applied by our Lord to Himself. But comp. Notes on chap. x. 36; Matt. xxvi. 63; and xxvii. 43. On the other hand, the reading, "Son of God," is certainly as old as the second century, and seems to supply the sense which the context requires. The man had been cast out. Our Lord hears of this, and knows it is because of his bold confession that He was a prophet. The lesson He had before taught him had been learnt, and had borne fruit. He will lead him from that confession to a higher one. He marks him out as distinct from others, and asks a question which is meant by its form to lead him to an affirmative answer, "*Thou* believest on the Son of God?" This question follows naturally on the truth which the man had grasped. "If this Man were not of God, He could do nothing" (verse 33), and this title was one of the theocratic names of the Messiah. (Comp. chap. i. 49.) The title, "Son of Man," could hardly have conveyed to him the same meaning. Its insertion in some of the MSS. here is probably to be traced to the fact that copyists substituted the title which our Lord more generally used for the rarer one. We should carefully bear in mind that though our Lord does not usually apply the title "Son of God" to Himself, He constantly asserts the truth which it expresses. (Comp., *e.g.*, in this Gospel, chaps. v., vii., and viii.)

(36) **Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?**—For "Lord" it would be better to read *Sir*, as in chaps. iv. 11, 19; v. 7, *et. al.* The man does not express by it more than the reverence to a prophet or teacher. He recognises Him by the voice which he had heard before, and now for the first time sees Him. He is ready to believe on the Messiah whom all expected, and he feels that this prophet, who had opened his eyes, can tell him who the Messiah is. The form of the question, "Who is He?" suggests that he half expected that He, upon whom he looked, was more than a prophet, and was none other than the Messiah Himself. In the absence of any such thought, the question would have taken a vague form, such as "Where is He?" or "When shall He appear?" He asks as one who knows that the object of his faith is at hand.

(37) **Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.**—The answer reminds us of that to the woman of Samaria, "I that speak unto thee am He" (chap. iv. 26); but here both the sense of sight and that of hearing are appealed to as conveying knowledge to the mind. There is a special fitness in the emphasis thus laid upon the seeing Him, in the case of one whose very power to see was witness to the presence of the Messiah. The words do not refer to any earlier meeting, but the perfect tense refers to the completion of the act of vision and the abiding impression.

(38) **And he said, Lord, I believe.**—The title is repeated, but now with the deeper meaning. His half-faith has passed into full conviction. The spiritual education has led him step by step from "the Man that is called Jesus" (verse 11) to the confession that He is "a prophet" (verse 17), and that He is "of God" (verse 33), to the belief that He is the Messiah. It is the course of a plain man in the honesty of his heart daring to think for himself, and to act upon his convictions. He declines to be silenced by authority, or ensnared in the mazes of argument. The ultimate facts of his own consciousness supply him with a definite foundation of truth, and this is immoveable. The steps by which he advances in knowledge are a striking comment on the promise (chap. vii. 17).

**And he worshipped him.**—The act of adoration is the necessary expression of his faith in the Son of God. We may not think that he has yet learnt all that this term includes; but he has at least learnt that the Son of God has the attribute of the divine glory, and is the object of human worship. It should be noted that St. John uses the word here rendered "worshipped" only when speaking of the worship of God. (Comp. also chaps. iv. 20—24 and xii. 20.)

(39) **For judgment I am come into this world.**—These words arise immediately out of what has preceded. The beggar has passed from a state of physical blindness, and has received the faculty of sight. He has passed from a state of spiritual blindness, and has received the power to recognise and believe on Jesus

am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. (40) And *some* of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? (41) Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

A.D. 32.

CHAPTER X.—(1) Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by

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Christ as the Son of God. He did not see, but the result of the manifestation of the Messiah is for him that he now does see. Conscious of his own spiritual blindness, he asked, "Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?" and to him, as to every earnest and humble seeker after truth, because in all his seeming need he really "hath," there is given that he may "have more abundance." In marked contrast to this spirit of humility and desire to come to the light, was that of the Pharisees. They claimed to have the "key of knowledge" (Matt. xi. 25), and were, as a Pharisee represents him who is "called a Jew," "confident that they were guides of the blind, lights of them which are in darkness" (Rom. ii. 17 *et seq.*; comp. 1 Cor. i. 21; iii. 18). Conscious of their own spiritual light, they felt no need of a truer Light, and therefore could not see it; and from them, as from every careless and self-trusting possessor of truth, because, in all his seeming abundance, he really "hath not," there is taken away "even that he hath." (Comp. Note on chap. i. 16.)

This passing from darkness to light, and from light to darkness, suggests thoughts which our Lord has already uttered in chap. iii. 17—19, and which will meet us again more fully in chap. xii. 37—50. (See Notes on these passages.) Judgment is not the ultimate end of His coming, for He came to save the world; but it is an end, and therefore a result. The special form of the word rendered "judgment" in this place is used nowhere else by St. John, and indicates that what is here thought of is not the act of judging, but the concrete result—the sentence pronounced after judgment. His coming was a bringing light into the darkness of men's hearts, a testing of the false and the true, and as men accepted or rejected Him they pronounced a judicial sentence upon themselves. That light judged no man, and yet by it every man was judged.

**That they which see not might see.**—The force of these words lies in the fact that the phrases, "they which see not" and "they which see," are to be interpreted as from their own point of view—"That they which think they see not might really see; and that they which think they see might really be made blind."

(40) **And some of the Pharisees which were with him.**—The words in the preceding verse are not addressed specially to any one. The Pharisees would be still watching our Lord, and some had probably followed the beggar, expecting that our Lord would seek him, and hoping that the interview might furnish some ground for a fresh charge against one or both of them. It is the presence of mental conditions such as theirs and such as his that has brought again to our Lord's thoughts the judicial result of His manifestation, and this rises to His lips as an utterance of the solemn thought that fills His mind. The Pharisees hear this exclamation, and apply to themselves that which their own state suggested; but which was expressed as, and is, a wide law, holding true for all mankind.

**Are we blind also?**—They misunderstand His words, for He has asserted of the blind ("they which see not") that the result of His coming is "that they might see." But yet they do not understand the words in a physical sense, in which they could have had no application to themselves. Care is required to catch the force of the term in these three verses, and it may be well to distinguish again the meanings attached to the word blind. It is used (1) for physical blindness. This has been its meaning throughout the chapter. It suggests the imagery in these verses, but is not itself present in the thought which is of spiritual, blindness only. (2) For conscious spiritual blindness ("they which see not," "they which think they see not"), which is really the first step to spiritual sight. (3) For unconscious spiritual blindness ("they which see," "they which think they see"), which is really the first step to a total loss of spiritual perception.

(41) **If ye were blind, ye should have no sin.**—His answer is that He does not place them among those who are in this second sense blind. If they were among those "which see not" they would be conscious of their blindness, and would seek for spiritual light. They would ask, "Who is He, Lord, that we may believe on Him?" and would not ask in vain. In that case their present rejection of Him would arise from ignorance willing to be overcome, and this ignorance, not being wilful, would not be sin. Conscious ignorance would be the first step towards knowledge.

**But now ye say, We see.**—Their true place is among those who were spiritually blind, and were unconscious of it, "they which see," "they which think they see." For them the first step towards true spiritual light must be a consciousness of blindness. As it is, as long as they think that they see, there is no ground for hope. (Comp. Matt. ix. 12, 13.)

**Therefore your sin remaineth.**—The word "therefore" should probably be omitted. The words "Your sin remaineth," or better, *Your sin abideth* (comp. Note on chap. iii. 36), stand alone in their awful solemnity. They stand side by side with "Ye say, We see." The two states are one. The assertion of spiritual knowledge and independence was the original cause of sin (Gen. iii. 8), and while spiritual pride exists sin cannot cease.

## X.

[(2) JESUS IS TRUTH, LIGHT, AND LOVE (*cont.*).
- (*c*) *Jesus is Love* (chap. x. 1—42).
  - (*α*) The Good Shepherd, who giveth His life for the sheep (verses 1—20).
  - (*β*) The discourse at the Feast of the Dedication (verses 22—38).
    - The true sheep hear the Shepherd's voice (verses 22—30).
    - The charge of blasphemy shown by their Scriptures to be groundless (verses 30—38).
  - (*γ*) Rejected in Jerusalem, Jesus goes away beyond Jordan).]

(1) **Verily, verily, I say unto you.**—This formula is not used at the beginning of a fresh discourse, but is, in every case, the solemn introduction of some development of our Lord's deeper teaching. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 51.) We are not, then, to regard this chapter as a new subject, but as part of the teaching commenced

the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. (2) But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. (3) To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he

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in chap. ix. 35, and arising out of the sign of healing the blind man. This sign is present to their thoughts at the close of the discourse, in verse 21.

**He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold.**—The special form which the discourse here takes has been thought, with a probability which does not fall far short of certainty, due to the actual presence of a sheepfold with the shepherds and their flocks. (See chap. v. 2.) We know that Bethesda was near the "sheep-gate," and we have seen that it is not improbably to be identified with a covered portion of the Pool of Siloam. (See Note on chap. v. 2.) In any case, there must have been sheepfolds sufficiently near to make it possible that they had arrived at one, and the change in the central points of the allegory find their most natural explanation in thoughts of the shifting scene on which it is based. The description of such a scene, by Bochart, written more than two centuries ago, has been borne out by all modern travellers. We have to think of an open fold, surrounded by a wall or railing, into which, at eventide, the shepherds lead their flocks, committing them, during the night, to the care of an under-shepherd, who guards the door. In the morning they knock and the porter opens the door, which has been securely fastened during the night, and each shepherd calls his own sheep, who know his voice and follow him to the pasturage. (Comp. Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, vol. i., pp. 299—302.)

It is to some part of such a scene as this, passing before our Lord's eye as He taught, that we have to trace the words which follow. But we must remember that His mind and theirs were full of thoughts ready to pass into a train like this. "Thy servants are shepherds, both we and also our fathers" (Gen. xlvii. 3), was the statement of the first sons of Israel, and it was true of their descendants. This truth was bound up with their whole history. The greatest heroes of Israel—Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David—had all been shepherds, and no imagery is more frequent in prophecy or psalm than that drawn from the shepherd's work. We must fill our minds with these Old Testament thoughts if we would understand this chapter. Let any one, before commencing it, read thoughtfully Ps. xxiii., Isa. xl. 11, Jer. xxiii. 1—4, Ezek. xxxiv., and especially Zech. xi. 4—17, and he will find that he has the key which unlocks most of its difficulties. We have, then, the scene passing before their eyes, and the Old Testament thoughts of the Shepherd, connected as they were, on one hand with Jehovah and the Messiah, and on the other with the careless shepherds of Israel, dwelling in their minds; and we have, in the events which have just taken place, that which furnishes the starting-point, and gives to all that follows its fulness of meaning. The Pharisees claimed for themselves that they were shepherds of Israel. They decreed who should be admitted to, and who should be cast out from the fold. They professed to be interpreters of God's truth, and with it to feed His flock. Pharisees, shepherds! what did they, with their curses and excommunications, know of the tenderness of the Shepherd who "shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young"? Pharisees feed the flock of God! What had they, with their pride and self-righteousness, ever known of the infinite love and mercy of God; or what had their hearts ever felt of the wants and woes of the masses of mankind? This poor blind beggar was an example of their treatment of the weaker ones of the flock. In spirit, if not in deed (chap. ix. 22, 34), they had thrust him out from the fold of God. The true Shepherd had sought and found this lost sheep, who is now standing near, in His presence and in that of the false shepherds. He teaches who the Shepherd and what the flock of God really are.

On the meaning of "the door," see the fuller expansion in verses 7—9.

**Climbeth up some other way.**—Or, more exactly, *climbeth up from elsewhere*—*i.e.*, from some part of the fence, away from the door where the porter is watching.

**The same is a thief and a robber.**—The former of these words means the petty thief who commits the smaller or unobserved robbery. The latter means the brigand or highwayman, and is applied, *e.g.*, to Barabbas and to the two crucified with our Lord. The words are repeated in verse 8. They are probably joined together to express, in all its fulness, the idea which is common to both. If we press the individual sense of each, it may be that the false shepherds united the meaner faults and the greater crimes.

(2) **But he that entereth in by the door.**—See Notes on verses 7—9.

**Is the shepherd of the sheep.**—Better, *is a shepherd of the sheep.* The word here (comp. verse 12) simply characterises him that entereth by the door as a shepherd, in opposition to the robber who climbeth over the fence.

(3) **To him the porter openeth.** — The word "porter" is not, perhaps, misleading to many, but for the sake of the possible few, it may be noted that *door-keeper* is what is here meant. There is no further interpretation of what, in the spiritual fold, corresponds to the office of the porter, whereas the door and the shepherd are successively made the texts of fuller expositions of Christ's own work. We are not, therefore, to regard "the porter" as an essential part of the allegory (comp. verse 5), nor need we trouble ourselves with the various expositions which have been given of it. At the same time, we should not forget that the thought is one which impressed itself on the mind of St. Paul. At Ephesus "a great and effectual door was opened unto him" (1 Cor. xvi. 9); "when he came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel a door was opened unto him of the Lord" (2 Cor. ii. 12); the Colossians are exhorted to pray that "a door of the word (the gospel) may be opened, to speak the mystery of Christ" (Col. iv. 3); at the close of the first missionary journey he and Barnabas told how "God had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles" (Acts xiv. 27). We have St. Paul's authority, therefore, for understanding by the "door-keeper," if we are to interpret it here, the Holy Spirit, whose special work it is to determine who are shepherds and sheep, and to call each to the work and position given to him by God. We must be careful to note, with this interpretation, that St. Paul gives divine titles to Him who thus opens the door, lest, from the humble position of the porter in the material fold, we should be led to unworthy thoughts of Him who is "neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding."

**And the sheep hear his voice.**—The reference is here to the whole of the sheep in the fold; they are calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. (4) And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. (5) And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. (6) This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

(7) Then said Jesus unto them again,

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all roused as they hear a shepherd's cry, which is the signal for their being led forth to the pastures.

**And he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.**—Now the sheep of the shepherd's own flock are thought of. They are singled out from the rest, each one by its own name. A mountain shepherd in our own country, and even a shepherd's dog, will know a single sheep among hundreds from other flocks, and there is nothing more strange in the sheep being trained to know its own name and its shepherd's voice. We have to think, also, of a much closer relationship between the owner and his sheep, which were almost part of his family, than any with which we are familiar. All animals learn to know those who love and protect them, and the Eastern shepherd was as much with his sheep as we are with the domestic animals. (Comp. 1 Sam. xvii. 34—37; 2 Sam. xii. 3.) The practice was not unknown in the West, for Aristotle tells us that "in each flock they train the bell-wether to lead the way, whenever he is called by name by the shepherd" (*History of Animals*, vi. 19); and Theocritus has handed down to us the names by which the Shepherd Lacon addressed three of his flock:—

> "Ho, Curly-horn; Ho, Swift-foot, leave the tree,
> And pasture eastward where ye Baldhead see."
>
> *Idyll*, v. 102, 3.

(4) **And when he putteth forth his own sheep.**—The majority of the better MSS. add the word "all." The tense is past. We should read, therefore, *when he has put forth all his own sheep.* The addition is important as marking the care of the shepherd to count his flock and see that none is missing. The word "put forth" is stronger than "lead out," in the previous verse, and represents the details of the action as it took place in the sheepfold. The shepherd would call each sheep by name, and when it answered to its name would drag it outside the fold. Though it knew its shepherd, it would be unwilling to separate itself from the whole flock. One by one, then, he calls his sheep, and places them outside the fold.

**He goeth before them, and the sheep follow him.**—This is one of the incidents in the management of an Eastern flock, which strikes all who see it for the first time, and is abundantly illustrated in books of Eastern travel. The details are here given with minute accuracy. When the last sheep has been brought out the shepherd places himself at their head, and the flock together follow him.

**For they know his voice.**—The word is stronger than the one in verse 3, "and the sheep hear his voice." It expresses the familiar knowledge which the little flock has of the voice of their own shepherd who leads them day by day.

(5) **And a stranger will they not follow.**—The "stranger" is any one other than their own shepherd, and the term is not to be limited to the "thief" and "robber" of verse 1. The thought is of the flock following the shepherd to the pasture. On the road they would meet other persons whom they would not follow. Some would, as thieves and robbers, seek to lead them away, calling them by their names and imitating their shepherd's cry; but they have, by long usage, got to know his voice, and will not follow a stranger.

**But will flee from him.**—A strange word is a source of alarm to them. With the known tone of the shepherd's voice they have learnt to associate protection, guidance, food. His voice recalls these associations. A stranger's voice is something unknown, and therefore feared. It is as the voice of a plundering Arab who has called the flock before, or as the cry of a wild beast who has broken into the fold at night. The associations with unfamiliar words are only of things which are evil.

(6) **This parable spake Jesus unto them.**—Better, *this allegory spake Jesus unto them.* The word rendered "parable" is the wider word (*παροιμία, paroimia*) which includes every kind of figurative and proverbial teaching, every kind of speech, as the etymology reminds us, which departs from the usual course (*οἶμος, oimos*). St. John nowhere uses the word "parable." The word *paroimia* occurs again in chap. xvi. 25, 29, and once besides in the New Testament; this is in 2 Pet. ii. 22 ("according to the true proverb"), in a quotation from the Greek version of Prov. xxvi. 11, where the Hebrew word is *māshal.* (Comp. Note on Matt. xiii. 3, and Trench *On the Parables*, pp. 8—10.) The discourse of this chapter differs from the true parable, which is a story in which the outer facts are kept wholly distinct from the ideal truths that are to be taught; whereas here the form and the idea interpenetrate each other at every point. It is so in the other so-called "parable" in this Gospel (chap. xv.). Strictly speaking, neither the "Good Shepherd" nor the "True Vine" is a parable. Both are "allegories," or rather, they are, as there is every reason to think, allegorical interpretations of actual events in the material world, which are thus made the vehicle of spiritual truths. It will follow from this that the interpretation of every point in the history of the material facts (*e.g.*, "the porter" in verse 3) is not always to be pressed. In the parable the story is made to express the spiritual truth, and with greater or lesser fulness every point in it may have its spiritual counterpart. The outer facts which are allegorised exist independently of the spiritual truth. The fact that they express it at some central points is all that is necessary for the allegory, and greater caution should attend the use of any addition to the interpretation which is given.

**But they understood not what things they were . . .**—They of course understood the outer facts, then passing before their eyes, or, in any case, well known to them. What they did not understand was the spiritual truths underlying these phenomena. They must have known His words had some spiritual meaning. They were accustomed to every form of allegorical teaching, and they could not have thought that He was simply describing to them the every-day events of the shepherd's life. But they who think that they see (chap. ix. 41) are spiritually blind, and cannot understand the elements of divine truth.

(7) **Then said Jesus unto them again.**—Better, *Therefore said Jesus again,* the words "unto them" being of uncertain authority. He says what follows

Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. (8) All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. (9) I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go

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because they did not understand what He had said before. It is not that a new allegory begins at this place. He spake in the beginning of the door and of the shepherd (verses 1, 2). He now proceeds to unfold the meaning of both.

**Verily, verily, I say unto you.**—Comp. Note on verse 1.

**I am the door of the sheep.**—Taking these words in connection with verses 1 and 2, they seem to mean not "the door for the sheep," but "the door to the sheep," "the door into the sheep-fold." Our Lord returns to the words, and explains them more fully, in verse 9.

(8) **All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers.**—Comp. Note on verse 1. The Sinaitic MS. and several of the early versions read this verse without the words translated "before Me," but the balance of authority is strongly in their favour; and the fact of their being hard to understand, or having been misunderstood, is the probable reason of their omission. Retaining them, as we seem bound to do, we are also bound to give them their ordinary temporal meaning. There can be but one rendering which suggests itself to the unbiassed mind, and that is the rendering of our version. The Greek words and the English words are equally plain, and other renderings are due to the exigencies of interpretation.

What, then, do the words mean? Their force seems to be all-inclusive; and yet they cannot contradict Christ's own words, which have excluded Abraham, Moses, the prophets, John the Baptist, from any possibility of such thoughts. (See chaps. iv. 22; v. 33, 39, 45; vii. 19.) They cannot, on the other hand, be limited to false Christs, who did not come before but after our Lord. (Comp. Note on chap. v. 43.) Here, as often, the true meaning seems for the most part to have been overlooked because men have sought it elsewhere than in the words themselves, and in their place among other words. The thought which precedes and which follows is that Jesus is Himself "the door." "All that ever came before Me" is in immediate contrast to this thought, and the sense is, "all professing to be themselves the door, to be the means by which men enter the fold, to be the Mediator between man and God." The Old Testament teachers cannot be meant, because they witnessed to the true door. But there had been growing up since the return from the Captivity, and the close of the Old Testament canon, a priestly caste in the place of the prophetic schools, and these men had been in practice, if not in word, claiming for themselves the position of door to the kingdom of God. There were Hillels and Shammais, heads of parties and of factions, whose word was to their followers as the word of God; there were Pharisees then standing round Him who had solemnly decreed that any one who should confess Him to be the Messiah should be shut out from Temple and from synagogue, and that they themselves would in God's name pronounce a curse upon his head (chap. ix. 22). As "thieves" were they, and as "robbers;" wolves in sheep's clothing, stealing into the flock of Christ and rending those who were the true sheep. (Comp. the analogous language of Luke xi. 52.) The lawyers closed the door and plundered and oppressed those whom they kept outside.

Attention should be paid to the present tense of the verb "are" in this sentence, which seems in itself to suggest that the words which follow find their application in the case of the persons then actually living.

**But the sheep did not hear them.**—Read again verses 3—5. What is true of the sheep and the voice of the stranger is true also of man and of every voice which is not of God. The heart of the child answers to the voice of the Father; it trembles at any voice which is unknown. The conscience of mankind knows the voice of God; but it will not hear the voice of the devil, nor the unreal voice of man claiming to speak in God's name. It will not call bitter, sweet; nor sweet, bitter; darkness, light; nor light, darkness. It will not accept the false, the impure, the wrong, for it is the God in man which ever is, and ever must be true and holy and right. So it was that the teaching of scribes and Pharisees never really influenced the masses of the people, for it was concerned with the externals of matter and form, and they wanted the living truth. So it has been that systems of error have had their day, but have had no principle of life, because they were not the voice of God speaking to the heart of man; and in so far as they have lived at all, it has been because the error has been but in the form, or has been in part only of the substance, which has also contained some germ of truth. So it has been in every age, and in every school of thought, that the men whom the sheep have heard have been men who have had in them the ring of the true, and have been as prophets uttering the voice of God. Witness Paul of Tarsus, and Francis of Assisi; Luther, and Savonarola; John Knox, and John Wesley; Charles Simeon, and John Keble.

(9) **By me if any man enter in.**—He returns to the thought of the door, through which every true shepherd must himself enter the fold. The thought is parallel to that of the "strait gate" and "narrow way," in Matt. vii. 13, 14, and with St. Paul's thought in Rom. v. 2, and Eph. ii. 18. No one can really enter the fold and become a shepherd of the flock who does not seek to do so through the character and life and death of Christ—*i.e.*, to devote himself in entire self-sacrifice to the sheep whom he seeks to lead; to live in unfailing prayer to and communion with God, whose the sheep are; to find for himself as for them "the access through Christ Jesus by one Spirit unto the Father." We may not narrow the door to the fold, nor yet may we widen it. He is the Door. No shepherd may enter unless through Him.

**He shall be saved.**—The words refer primarily to the dangers without the fold from which he shall be delivered. (See the striking parallel in 1 Cor. iii. 15, and Note there.) But in the wider thought they include the salvation from sin which is in this life to be realised, and is a necessary qualification for the pastor's work.

**And shall go in and out, and find pasture.**—The fold will ever be open to him who enters by the Door. He will have perfect freedom to enter, whenever storm or danger or night approaches. He will lead out and find pasture for his flock. In the devotion of his service, and in communion with God, he will daily have an increasing knowledge of truths new and old, and the truths which he learns he will give as food for the souls of men.

in and out, and find pasture. (10) The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly. (11) I am the good shepherd:[a] the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. (12) But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

[a] Isa. 40. 11; Ezek. 34. 23.

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(10) **The thief cometh not, but for to steal.**—Comp. Notes on verses 1 and 8. The description of the thief is opposed to that of the shepherd, who constantly goes in and out and finds pasture. His visits are but rare, and when he comes it is but for his own selfish purposes, and for the ruin of the flock. Each detail of his cruel work is dwelt upon, to bring out in all the baseness of its extent the corresponding spiritual truth.

**I am come that they might have life.**—More exactly, *I came that they might have life.* The pronoun should be emphasised. *I* came, as opposed to the thief. He does not further dwell upon the shepherd, but passes on to the thought of Himself, and thereby prepares the way for the thought of Himself as the Good Shepherd in the following verse. The object of His coming is the direct opposite of that of the thief, who comes only to steal and to kill and to destroy. He came once for all, that in Him the sheep may have life. (Comp. chap. vi. 50, 51.) The Sinaitic MS. inserts the word "eternal" here—"that they might have life eternal." The word is probably not part of the original text, and the thought is rather of the present spiritual life which every believer now hath, and which will issue in eternal life. But comp. Note on verse 28.

**And that they might have it more abundantly.**—Better, *and that they might have it abundantly.* The word "more" is an insertion of the English version without any authority, and it weakens the sense. It is not that a greater is compared with a less abundance, but that the abundance of life which results through Christ's coming is contrasted with the spiritual wants and death which He came to remove. This life is through Him given to men abundantly, overflowingly. We are reminded of the Shepherd-King's Psalm singing of the "green pastures," and "waters of rest," and "prepared table," and "overflowing cup"; and carrying all this into the region of the spiritual life we come again to the opening words of this Gospel, "And of His fulness did we all receive, and grace for grace" . . . "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (chap. i. 16, 17).

(11) **I am the good shepherd.**—The central point of the allegory has now passed from the "Door," through the last verse as the connecting-link, to the "Good Shepherd." If we think that the whole discourse was suggested by a scene actually occurring (comp. Note on verse 1), then the prominence of an actual shepherd passing before them would suggest the turn which it now takes.

The word "good" means that which is fair, and is in a physical sense that which is in its own nature excellent, and in a moral sense that which is beautiful and noble. St. John uses the word only in chap. ii. 10, of the "good wine," and in this chapter here and in verses 14, 32, and 33. (Comp. Note on Luke viii. 15.) The passage of the Old Testament referred to above has prepared our minds for this thought of Christ, especially Ps. xxiii.; Isa. xl. 11; Ezek. xxxiv. 11—16, 23; xxxvii. 24. He is the Shepherd who is ideally good, fulfilling every thought of guidance, support, self-sacrifice that had ever gathered round the shepherd's name. No image of Christ has so deeply impressed itself upon the mind of the Church as this has. We find it in the earliest Christian literature, as in Tertullian (*Works*, vol. i., p. 371, in Ante-Nicene Library), or Clement of Alexandria (*Works*, vol. i., pp. 149, 462, A.N. Lib.). We find it in the very earliest efforts of Christian art, in painting, embroidery, and even statuary. (See Kugler's *Handbook, Italian Schools*, Lady Eastlake's Trans., 4th Ed., pp. 5 and 6.) It comes to us naturally in our hymns and prayers. The pastoral staff is the fit emblem of the Bishop's work, and the Pastor is the name by which the humble way-side flock thinks of him who in Christ's name is appointed to be their guide.

**Giveth his life for the sheep.**—This was true of the actual shepherds, of whose devoted bravery many instances are told. A striking one is that of David himself who rescued the lamb of his father's flock from the mouth of the lion and the bear (1 Sam. xvii. 34—37). That self-sacrifice that would lead the shepherd to risk his own life for that of his flock has its ideal fulfilment in Him who is the Good Shepherd, and will give His life for mankind. The word rendered "giveth His life," should be almost certainly *layeth down His life.* They are found only in St. John's writings. The other passages are verses 15, 17, 18; chaps. xiii. 37, 38; xv. 13; 1 John iii. 16 (twice).

(12) **But he that is an hireling.**—The Greek word occurs again in the New Testament only in the next verse and in Mark i. 20. It implies a lower position than the household servant, and is more nearly what we should call the tramp-labourer. The thought follows from that of the good shepherd who in the time of danger will give his own life for the sheep. The hireling has no interest in the sheep, and cares for them only as far as to secure his own hire. This want of interest is strongly expressed in the double statement, "not the shepherd," "whose own the sheep are not." In the interpretation we are not to think of the hierarchy, who have been already, in verse 8, designated as "thieves and robbers," breaking into the fold, but of all persons who from any other motive than love for humanity, and by any other way than the door which is Christ, or by any other call than that of the Holy Spirit, take upon themselves the office of shepherds of the flock. The hour of danger will distinguish between the shepherd and the hireling. The one, loving the sheep, will give even his life for them. The other, caring only for the hire, in whatever form it comes, will flee and leave the sheep as a prey to the wolf.

**And the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.**—The words "the sheep" are not found in the majority of the better MSS., and their insertion makes the sentence awkward, because the pronoun "them" has been immediately before used for the same sheep. Adopting the better reading (see Note on next verse), we have, *and the wolf catcheth them, and maketh havoc*—*i.e.*, seizeth individual sheep, and maketh havoc in the flock. Under the general image we are to understand all the spiritual foes which destroy individual souls and rend the Church of Christ. The wolf is the natural enemy of the sheep, and the fit emblem of all evil persons, who are the natural enemies of the sheep

(13) The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. (14) I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine. (15) As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. (16) And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold,[a] *and* one shepherd. (17) Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my

[a] Ezek. 37. 22.

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of Christ's fold. He spake of "false prophets" as "ravening wolves" (Matt. vii. 15). He sent forth the Twelve "as sheep in the midst of wolves" (Matt. x. 16), and the Seventy, whose mission, we shall see (comp. Note on verse 22), was connected with the teaching of this chapter, "as lambs among wolves" (Luke x. 3). St. Paul foresaw that in the very city from which St. John wrote this Gospel, "after his departing, grievous wolves would enter in among them, not sparing the flock" (Acts xx. 29). These are the only passages in the New Testament where the word occurs, and from them we may gather that while wolves represent all false teachers and foes to truth, "*the* wolf" represents him who is the source from whence they come. As all shepherds are related to the Good Shepherd, so are all wolves to *the* wolf whose work they do.

(13) **The hireling fleeth.**—These words are again an addition to the text, and should be omitted with the great majority of the best authorities. If we omit them this verse must be immediately connected with that which precedes, the last clause of which is a parenthesis —"But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth (and the wolf catcheth them, and *maketh havoc*), *because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.*" The sense is not affected by the omission, and the words were apparently added as a gloss to make the meaning clear. The thought of the hireling is repeated to express the nature of the man, and to strengthen the contrast with the Good Shepherd which immediately follows.

(14) **And know my sheep, and am known of mine.**—Better, *and know those who are Mine, and those who are Mine know Me.* The thought of the Good Shepherd is repeated to show that it expresses the closest communion between the shepherd and the sheep. It is not simply that the sheep know the Shepherd's voice, but they partake of His nature, and the solemn form in which He expresses this union is in likening it to that between His Father and Himself.

(15) **As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father.**—Better, . . . *and I know the Father.* Our version, by its rendering, and by the division of verses, fails to give the full meaning, and there is thus, indeed, no reason for the assertion of the mutual knowledge of the Father and the Son. But connecting the words with those of the previous verse, we have, "I am the Good Shepherd, and know *those who are Mine, and those who are Mine know Me, even as the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father.*" This deeper sense of union between the human spirit and Himself, and the wondrous likening of it to the union of Himself and the Father, is present to His mind as the close of His work on earth draws near. We find it again in chaps. xiv. 20; xv. 10; xvii. 8, 21. It is bound up with the thought of the love which lays down His own life for them. This is repeated here and again in verses 17 and 18.

(16) **And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold.**—The words recall to the mind a question which the Jews had asked at this very feast, "Will He go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?" (chap. vii. 35). They asked it in the bitterness of scorn. He asserts that among the Gentiles—who are not of the Jewish fold—He already possesses sheep; just as He says to Paul concerning Corinth, "I have much people in this city" (Acts xviii. 10). The Old Testament prophets had foretold this coming of the Gentiles, as *e.g.* Isa. lii. 13 *et seq.;* liii. 10 *et seq.;* Mic. iv. 2; and it is present to our Lord's mind here as the result of His laying down His life for the sheep. (Comp. Notes on chaps. xi. 52 and xii. 32.)

**Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice.**—The bringing in of the Gentiles was in the Divine counsel part of the Messianic work which He must therefore needs do. It would result from His being lifted up that all men should be drawn unto Him, and would be accomplished in the mission-work of the Church. These scattered sheep shall hear His voice, for the conscience which knows the voice of God is the heritage of all men; they shall hear it, as the words seem to imply, while the sheep now in the fold refuse to follow it. (Comp. Notes on Matt. viii. 11 and Rom. xi. 17.)

**And there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.**—Better, *There shall become one flock, and one shepherd.* The word here rendered "fold," is quite distinct from that which occurs in verse 1, and in the earlier clause of this verse. It should be, beyond all doubt, rendered "flock"; but the reader may prove this for himself by comparing the only other passages where it is found in the New Testament—Matt. xxvi. 31; Luke ii. 8; 1 Cor. ix. 7 (twice). In each of these passages we have "flock"; but here our version has followed the Vulgate and the Great Bible in giving "fold," whereas both Tyndale and Coverdale had rightly given "flock." But even "flock" and "shepherd" fail to catch the expressiveness of the Greek, where the words are closely allied, and of nearly the same sound, "There shall be one *poimnē* and one *poimēn*." Luther's German can exactly render the verse. "Und Ich habe noch andere Schafe, die sind nicht aus diesem *Stalle.* Und dieselben muss Ich herführen, und sie werden meine Stimme hören, und wird eine *Herde* und ein *Hirte* werden."

It is not uniformity which is promised, but unity. The distinction is not merely one of words, but upon it depends a wide and important truth. It is not unity of fold which is regarded as the future of the Church, but unity of flock. There will be many folds, in many nations, in many ages, in many climes. But for all Christians there will be one true Shepherd who layeth down His life for the sheep, and all these differing folds shall, through living unity with Him, make one vast flock.

(17) **Therefore doth my Father love me . . .**—For the meaning of this difficult verse, comp. Notes on chap. v. 17 *et seq.*, and on Phil. ii. 8, 9. The thought is that in the relation between the Father and the human nature of Christ, the reason of the Father's love is based upon the self-devotion of the Son. He who so loved the world that he gave His only-begotten Son to die for it, loves the Son who of His own will

life,[a] that I might take it again. (18) No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.[b]

(19) There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. (20) And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him? (21) Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

(22) And it was at Jerusalem the feast

[a] Isa. 53. 7, 8.

[b] Acts 2. 24.

A.D. 33.

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gives Himself to die. It is, if we might presume so to speak, as though the salvation of mankind had called forth a new relation of love between the Father and the Son.

**That I might take it again.**—This is given as part of the reason of the Father's love; and the words admit of no other construction. At first sight they seem to us paradoxical, beyond and against common feeling. In acts of sacrifice, the fact that that which is lost will be certainly regained, seems to us to take away all value from the act; but here the fact that Christ will lay down His life, is stated to be in order that He may take it again; and this is the foundation of the Father's love! The key to the meaning is in the truth that for Christ the taking again of human life is itself a further sacrifice, and that this is necessary for the completion of the Great Shepherd's work. The scattered sheep during the whole of the world's existence are to be gathered in by Him whose continued union with human nature makes Him at once the Shepherd who gives His life for the sheep, and the Door by whom we ever have access to the Father.

(18) **No man taketh it from me.**—It is better to leave the words in the greater width of the Greek, *No one taketh it from Me*, for it may be, indeed, that even the Father is included in the thought. The laying down of the life is absolutely self-determined, and therefore it is the reason of the Father's love. Up to the very last moments of life He lays stress on the perfectly voluntary nature of His death. "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit; and having said thus, He gave up the ghost." (See Note on Luke xxiii. 46.)

**I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.**—The words apply also to the human nature of our Lord, and the "power" spoken of is the authority derived from the Father. It is of His own will that He lays down His life and takes it again; but this, as the whole of the life of the Son, is in moral subordination to the Father. (Comp. Notes on chaps. v. 19 and xix. 10.) Hence it is that He speaks of taking His life again, while the general language of the New Testament speaks of His being raised by the Father. The taking again was under the Father's authority, and was therefore itself the Father's gift. (Comp. Note on 1 Pet. iii. 19.)

**This commandment have I received of my Father.**—Better, *did I receive*; pointing, probably, to the commission at the time of the Incarnation. He has asserted in fullest terms the entirely voluntary nature of His one sacrifice. He repeats in fullest terms the voluntary subordination of Son to Father, which is based upon equality of nature. Not only was the authority by which He would die and rise again derived from the Father, but both these acts were included in the decree which gave to Him the Messianic work. We should be on our guard against the mistake which is often made of understanding this commandment of the laying down the life only; it clearly extends also to the taking it again.

(19) **There was a division therefore again . . .**—The words carry us back to those of chap. ix. 16, where a like division was noted.

**Among the Jews.**—The Pharisees are mentioned before, and they are the persons who have been present all through this discourse. (Comp. chap. ix. 40.) The wider word is here, and in chap. ix. 18, applied to them. They were identifying themselves with, and becoming leaders of, the party who were the enemies of Christ. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 19.)

(20) **He hath a devil, and is mad.**—Comp. Note on chap. viii. 48. The words "and is mad" are explanatory of the possession by a demon.

(21) **Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil.**—We trace here again the presence of the better party among the Sanhedrin, which we found before (chap. ix. 16). "His words," they would say, "are words of calm teaching. The possession by a demon disorders, frenzies, makes the slave of madness. It is inconsistent with words like these."

**Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?**—"Surely a devil cannot open the eyes of the blind?" is the form their question took. They go back from the teaching to the great sign which gave rise to it, and they find that work and word are alike opposed to the thought of being the result of a demon's presence. Such a miracle had never before been known. A demon does not give the power to do a prophet's work. (Comp. Notes on chap. ix. 16 and Matt. xii. 24.)

(22) Between the last verse and this there is an interval of time which may be roughly taken as two months. Wieseler has calculated that the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles was on October 19, and the Feast of the Dedication on December 20. (See *Chron. Synops.*, Eng. Trans., p. 435; and comp. Note on chap. vii. 2, and *Chronological Harmony of the Gospels*, p. xxxv.) In this interval we may with great probability place the events and teaching contained in Luke x. 1—xiii. 21, with the parallels in St. Matthew. (Comp. Note on Luke x. 1.) The connection suggests several points of interest:—

(1) At the Feast of Tabernacles there was a practice, one of those which witnessed to a feeling wider than that of those who acted in it, of offering up seventy oxen for the seventy nations of the world, the number being taken partly from the list in Genesis, and partly from a vague idea of its sanctity. The number seventy was thus brought before the people with the recognition of the heathen world as within the hope of salvation, and the minds of men were prepared for the mission of the Seventy, which followed at no long interval.

(2) Verse 16 of this chapter finds the commencement of its fulfilment in this mission. The appointment of a new body of disciples, whose very number is symbolical of a wider work, was the first step in the bringing in of the "other sheep." The Twelve answered to the number of the tribes of Israel; but the

of the dedication,[a] and it was winter. (23) And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. (24) Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt?[1] If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. (25) Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works

[a] 1 Macc. 4. 59.

[1] Or, *hold us in suspense?*

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Seventy represent the nations of the world. The directions for this work to each body are nearly identical, but the restrictions laid upon the Twelve are not laid upon the Seventy.

(3) The reference in Luke x. 3 to the wolves among whom they would be as lambs, throws light upon verse 12. He who would lay down His life for them would expose them to the wolves because He as the Good Shepherd would save them from *the* wolf.

**And it was at Jerusalem.**—Better, *And the Feast of the Dedication was being held at Jerusalem.*—Although St. John gives no hint that our Lord had left the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, this specific mention of the city implies a return from a distance, for the words would be out of place if He had continued there during the interval since verse 21. They cannot be restricted to the feast, which was not confined to Jerusalem, but was universally observed by the Jews.

The reference in the margin warns us against the error of understanding "the Feast of the Dedication" as a feast in honour of the dedication of Solomon's or Zerubbabel's temple. We know of no annual festival connected with these dedications, and the statement that this feast was "in the winter" makes it almost certain that it was the feast instituted, B.C. 164, by Judas Maccabæus, in commemoration of the cleansing of the Temple after its profanation by Antiochus Epiphanes (1 Macc. iv. 52—59). It extended over eight days, beginning on the 25th of the month Kisleu, which answers to parts of our November and December. It is still called "Chanuca," the Dedication, while St. John's Greek name for it, which was adopted by the Vulgate (*Encœnia*), is familiar to English ears in connection with another commemoration. In this, as in other rejoicings, illumination was a prominent feature, and it was sometimes called the "Feast of Lights." The Temple and private houses were illuminated, and it was customary in the houses of the more wealthy and pious Jews to have a light for each member of the family, increasing by an additional light for each evening of the feast. The illumination has been sometimes traced to the discovery in the temple by the Maccabees of a vial of oil, sealed with the high priest's ring. This, it is said, was sufficient for the lamps for one evening only, but was miraculously multiplied so as to suffice for eight evenings, which was therefore devoted to annual illuminations in remembrance of this gift of God (*Talmud*, Shabbath 21*b*).

**And it was winter.**—Better, *It was winter.* These words should then be connected with the following verse. Our division breaks the sense.

(23) **And Jesus walked in the temple . . .**—Better, *and Jesus was walking.* The scene is remembered and pictured as it took place.

**In Solomon's porch.**—The place is mentioned again in Acts iii. 11 and v. 12. It was rather a cloister or arcade than what we usually call a porch. It is said to have been on the east of the Temple, and to have been a relic of the original building which had survived all destructions and restorations, and had brought down its founder's name from its founder's time. (Comp. Jos. *Ant.* xx. 9, § 7.) It does not seem clear, however, that Josephus calls anything more than the eastern wall by the name of Solomon, and he calls the cloister above it simply the "Eastern cloister." It is more likely that the true position of "Solomon's porch" is to be found in one of the subterranean structures which existed in the time of our Lord, and exist now as they did in the time of Solomon. Caspari would identify the corridor under *El-Aksa* with "Solomon's porch," and thus connect the place where our Lord walked at this feast with the Holy Church of Zion, and the place of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. (*Chron. and Geogr., Introd.*, Append. § 22; Eng. Trans., pp. 297—9. Comp. Note on refs. in Acts.) The place as mentioned here is another instance of the writer's remembrance of topographical details connected with the Temple. (Comp. chap. viii. 20.) The fact that it was winter, and the fact that He was walking in this covered cloister or crypt, explain each other.

(24) **Then came the Jews round about him.**—The words mean literally, they *encircled Him.* It is again the impression of one who saw what he records. He remembers how they stood in a circle round our Lord, and watched Him with eager eyes as they asked their question.

**How long dost thou make us to doubt?**—Literally, *How long dost Thou lift up our souls?* or, as the margin, "How long dost Thou keep us in suspense?" The words exactly express what was probably the real state of fluctuation in which many of these Jews then were. They do not in the true sense "believe" (verses 25, 26), and they soon pass to the other extreme of seeking to stone Him (verse 31); but in many of them the last miracle, and the words accompanying it, had left a conviction that He was more than human, and not possessed by a demon. (See Note on verse 21.) Two months have passed away, not, we may believe, without many an earnest thought and much anxious weighing of evidence concerning Him. And now the Feast of Dedication has come, and what thoughts have come with it? It is the Feast of Lights, and He had declared Himself the Light of the world. It is the Feast of Freedom, telling how the Maccabees had freed their nation from the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes, and He has declared that "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (chap. viii. 36). It is the feast which commemorates the cleansing of the Temple, and His first public appearance in the Temple was to cleanse it and claim it as His Father's house. May there not be, then, a close connection between the statement that "it was the Feast of the Dedication," and the question, "How long dost thou excite our souls?" Was He, the question would seem to ask, really the Messiah or not? though by the Messiah they mean only a temporal prince. Was He, like the Judas of whom they were thinking, raised up as a deliverer from the Roman power, to give them the freedom which had long been the national dream?

**If thou be the Christ, tell us.**—Comp. Note on Luke xxii. 67.

(25) **I told you, and ye believed not.**—Better, *and ye believe not,* as all the best MSS. Here, as in chap. viii. 25, where a similar direct question was put to Him, the answer is indirect. It could not be otherwise. Their misconception of the Messianic work had made the very word Messiah an impossible one for

that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. (26) But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. (27) My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: (28) and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. (29) My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand. (30) I and *my* Father are one.

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Him to utter to them. To have said He was the Messiah would have been to sanction their thought of Him as a temporal prince; to have said that He was not would have been to contradict the essential truth. He refers them, then, to His earlier words and deeds in proof of what He was. To inquirers of simpler hearts, as the woman of Samaria and the man born blind, He had used the word Messiah. To them He had again and again told the same truth, though the actual word had never crossed His lips while speaking to them.

**The works that I do in my Father's name.**—Comp. Note on chap. v. 36. This appeal to His works, and the assertion that they were done in His *Father's* name, is itself an answer in word and in deed that He was the Messiah.

(26) **But ye believe not.**—Comp. Notes on verses 5, 14, 16.

**As I said unto you.**—These words are not found in the Sinaitic or Vatican MSS., and are omitted by the best modern editors. They are not, however, without considerable authority, and the fact of their difficulty may have led to their omission. They are sometimes joined to the following verse, and some expositors accept this as their probable meaning; but although the preceding clause of verse 26 was not actually spoken in the previous discourse, it was implied, and the reference is of a like kind to that of the Messiah in verse 25. There is no real difficulty in the fact that He thus refers them to a discourse uttered two months before. In continuity of teaching from Him to them it immediately preceded, and at the commencement of this discourse He gathers up the thread of that which had gone before. On the other hand, the interval helps us to understand how He refers to a truth which was taught them, rather than to the actual words in which He taught it.

(27, 28) The reference to those who believe not because they were not of His sheep, introduces the contrast between them and those who were, and the position of the true members of the flock is expanded in this pair of parallel clauses. One member of each pair refers to the act or state of the sheep; and the other to the act or gift of the Shepherd. The pairs proceed in a climax from the first response of the conscience which recognises the divine voice to the eternal home which is in the Father's presence.

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|---|---|
| (1) "My sheep hear My voice," . . | "and I know them;" |
| (2) "And they follow Me" . . | "and I give unto them eternal life;" |
| (3) "And they shall never perish" . . . | "neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand." |

By reading successively the clauses placed on the left side of the page, we trace the progress of the human act and state; by reading, in the same way, the clauses on the right side of the page, we trace the progress of the divine gift; by reading each pair in the order of the text, we see how at each stage the gift is proportioned to the faculty which can receive it.

The earlier clauses are familiar to us from the preceding discourse, but some expressions will need a word of explanation.

**Eternal life.**—Comp. verse 10, where the word "eternal" is added in some readings. Here the verb is in the present, "I give (am now giving) them." (Comp. chaps. iii. 15; v. 24; vi. 47 *et seq.*). We cannot be too careful to observe that our Lord's thoughts of "eternal life" is never of the future only. It is a development, rather than a simply future existence. We shall live eternally, because we now live spiritually in communion with the Spirit who is Eternal.

**And they shall never perish.**—Comp. Notes on chap. viii. 51, and xi. 25, 26. The negative is in the strongest form—"They shall by no means perish for ever."

**Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.**—Better (comp. verse 18), *and none shall pluck them* . . . The words should not be limited by the insertion of the word man. They are to be taken as including every spiritual foe; all thieves and robbers that would break into the fold; all wolves that would rend the flock; the adversary who "as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour." (Comp. especially for the full thought of no separation from Christ, Rom. viii. 38, 39.) The words "out of my hand" express alike the strength which protects, and guidance which leads, and comfort which cherishes. (See Isa. xl. 11.) Out of this hand none shall pluck. Yet we are to bear in mind that the sheep itself may wander from the shepherd's care, and that all the fulness of these promises depends upon the human will, which is included in the first clause, "My sheep hear my voice . . . and they follow me."

(29) **My Father, which gave them me** (better, *hath given them Me*), **is greater than all.**—For the thought that they are given by the Father, comp. Note on chap. vi. 37. Here our version has rightly made no limiting addition to "all" (comp. last verse). In the width of the word, which extends to every creature and to every power, and even to the Son in His subordination to the Father, the Father is thought of as greater than all. Again the thought mounts with each succeeding sentence: (1) "None shall pluck them out of My hand;" (2) "They are My Father's gifts, and He is greater than all;" (3) "None shall pluck them out of My Father's hand."

(30) **I and my Father are one.**—The last clause of verse 29 is identical with the last clause of verse 28 if we identify "Father's" with "My." This our Lord now formally does. The last verses have told of power greater than all, and these words are an assertion that in the infinity of All-mighty Power the Son is one with the Father. They are more than this, for the Greek word for "one" is neuter, and the thought is not, therefore, of unity of person, but is of unity of essence. "The Son is of one substance with the Father." In the plural "are" there is the assertion of distinctness as against Sabellianism, and in the "one" there is the assertion of co-ordination as against Arianism. At recurring periods in the history of exegesis men have tried to establish that these words do not imply more than unity of will between the Father and the Son. We have seen above that they assert both oneness of power and oneness of nature;

(31) Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. (32) Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? (33) The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. (34) Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?[a] (35) If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; (36) say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because

[a] Ps. 82. 6.

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but the best answer to all attempts to attach any meaning lower than that of the divinity of our Lord to these His words is found here, as in the parallel instance in chap. viii. 58, 59, in the conduct of the Jews themselves. To them the words conveyed but one meaning, and they sought to punish by stoning what seemed to them to be blasphemy. Their reason is here given in express words, "because that Thou, being a man, makest thyself God" (verse 33).

(31) **Then the Jews took up stones again.**—Better, *The Jews therefore* . . . Their action follows as an effect caused by His words. The word "again" reminds us that they had done this two months before, at the Feast of Tabernacles (viii. 59). The words for "took up" are not the same. There the sense is, "they lifted up stones," and we are told that Jesus hid Himself; here the meaning is, "they carried stones," there being none in the cloister where they were. During this process their first burst of anger expended itself, and our Lord further disarms it with a question.

(32) **Jesus answered them**—*i.e.*, answered the thought which He read in their hearts, and the intention which was expressed by their act.

**Many good works have I shewed you from my Father.**—For the idea of "good" expressed here, comp. Note on verse 14. We have no better word in English; but "excellent," "distinguished," approach the sense. It is not the nature of the works as beneficent that is made prominent, but their moral excellence. They are works from the Father manifested in the visible world by the Son. (Comp. Notes on chap. v. 19, 20.) Jesus speaks of "many" such works. John has recorded but few, but he has given hints that many more were done (chaps. ii. 23, iii. 2, v. 36), and he afterwards expressly asserts this (chap. xx. 30).

**For which of those works do ye stone me?**—Again there is a fulness of meaning in the Greek which it is difficult to convey in translation. The word rendered "which" marks, not simple distinction, but quality. (Comp. "What kind of commandment," Note on Matt. xxii. 36.) "What is the character," our Lord would ask, "of that one of these works on account of which ye are about to stone Me?" If they had thought out this question they must have been led to see that the quality of the works proved that they were from God, and that therefore He by whom they had been wrought, was also from God. This thought of the quality of the works had been in the minds of some of them (chap. ix. 16). Its true issue would have been to worship Him as God; they are preparing to stone Him as a blasphemer.

(33) **The Jews answered him.**—Comp. for the thoughts of this verse Notes on verse 30 and on chap. v. 18.

**For a good work . . . but for blasphemy.**—The word rendered "for" is not the causal "on account of," which we have in the last verse, but "concerning," the technical form for an indictment. For the Mosaic law concerning blasphemy, see Lev. xxix. 10—16.

(34) **Is it not written in your law?**—Comp. Note on chap. viii. 17. The passage here quoted is in Ps. lxxxii. 6, but the term "Law" is here used in a wide sense for the whole of the Old Testament. There are other examples of this usage in chaps. vii. 49, xii. 34, and xv. 25; Rom. iii. 19; 1 Cor. xiv. 21.

**I said, Ye are gods?**—In the Hebrew of the Psalm, as in the Greek here, the pronoun is emphatic. "I myself said, Ye are gods?" The words are probably to be understood in the Psalm as spoken by God, who sits in judgment on the judges whom He had appointed, and gives the name of "gods" (*Elohim*) as representing Himself. See Ex. iv. 16; vii. 1; xviii. 15; xxi. 6; xxii. 8, 28; Deut. i. 17; 1 Sam. xxviii. 13; Pss. viii. 5 and xlv. 6; and comp. Perowne's Notes on Ps. lxxxii., and article "God," in Kitto's *Biblical Cyclopædia*, Ed. 3, vol. ii., p. 144 *et seq.*

(35) **If he called them gods.**—The argument is another example of Hillel's famous *First Canon of Interpretation*—that the greater may be inferred from the less. The pronoun "he" (*He*) refers probably to God (see Note on verse 34), or the rendering may be "it," as referring to "law"—*i.e.*, the Psalm.

**Unto whom the word of God came**—*i.e.*, the word declaring "Ye are gods," and pointing back to the time indicated by "I said," when each one was set apart to be a representative of God, and in that he had His authority to bear also His name.

**The scripture cannot be broken.**—More literally, *cannot be loosened.* Comp. Notes on Matt. v. 18, 19, and for the word rendered "broken" see also in this Gospel chaps. v. 18 and vii. 23.

(36) **Whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world.**—Better, *Whom the Father sanctified, and sent into the world.* The tense refers to the time of His consecration to His Messianic work, and to the Incarnation, which was the commencement of it.

**Because I said, I am the Son of God.**—He had not said this in express words, but, as we have seen, it is directly implied in verses 29 and 30, and the Jews had so understood what He said (verse 33).

So far, then, the argument is simply a technical one, such as formed the staple of those customary in Rabbinic schools, and based on the letter of the Scriptures. The law (Psalm) applied the term "Elohim" (gods) to men representing God; no word of that Scripture could fail to hold good; how much more, therefore (*a minori ad majus*), could the term Son of God be applied to Him who was not a man consecrated to any earthly office, but consecrated by God, and sent into the world to represent God to man. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 18.) Their charge of blasphemy is, on their own principles, without the shadow of foundation. But in these words there is a deeper meaning than this technical one. When we speak of "men representing God," we are already in thought foreshadowing the central truth of the Incarnation. Priests who offered sacrifices for sins, and kings who ruled God's people, and prophets

I said, I am the Son of God? (37) If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. (38) But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father *is* in me, and I in him. (39) Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand.

(40) And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode. (41) And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things

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who told forth God's will, were consecrated to their holy office because there was the divine in them which could truly be called "god." Every holy life was in its degree a type of the Incarnate life of the Son of God. But He was the ideally true Priest sacrificing Himself for the world, the ideally true Prophet declaring God's will in its fulness, the ideally true King ruling in righteousness. Every holy life was as a ray of the divine glory manifest in human flesh, but all these rays were centred in the nimbus of glory which rested as a crown on the head of Jesus Christ.

(37) **If I do not the works of my Father.**—He has met the charge of blasphemy on technical grounds. In this and the following verse He advances from that defence to the ultimate test. Whether He is a blasphemer or not depends upon whether He represents God or not, and to prove this He appeals again to the works. Are they or are they not the works of the Father? (verse 32; comp. chaps. v. 17, 36; ix. 3; xiv. 10.)

(38) **But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works.**—A higher faith would have believed Him. Had they truly known their own spiritual needs, and truly known the meaning of that great truth He had taught, they would have found in Him the true satisfaction of the mind's cravings, and the faculty of faith would have rested in the object of its existence. For all this the Old Testament had been a preparation; but their minds had not been prepared by it. He will take therefore their own lower ground, and appeal to the sight of those who have not faith. (Comp. Note on chap. xx. 29.) Let them test the works, think of their character, as some of them had already done (chap. ix. 16), and see at least that these are of the Father.

**That ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me.**—The more probable text is, *that ye may perceive, and may* (permanently) *know that the Father is in Me* . . . Failing the intuitive faith-knowledge, He appeals to the intellectual perception, which is not immediate, but from which they may ascend to that knowledge, and may then really know that such works can be only of the Father; and that, therefore, the Father is present in Him who does them, and that He who does them is one with the Father (verse 30).

(39) **Therefore they sought again to take him.**—He has removed all ground for the charge of blasphemy, and they have abandoned the attempt to stone Him, though He here repeats the very truth which led to that attempt before (verses 30, 31). The word "again" refers to previous attempts to take Him (chap. vii. 30, 32, 44).

**But he escaped out of their hand.**—Nothing is said of the manner, and there is no reason to suppose anything more than, while they were plotting how they might take Him, He passed out of the Temple. (Comp. chap. viii. 59.)

(40) **And went away again beyond Jordan.**—Comp. Note on chap. i. 28. In Matt. xix. 1 we have the fuller expression, "the coasts of Judæa beyond Jordan," referring to the same locality. The whole of Judæa proper was Cis-Jordanic, and the "Judah upon Jordan" (Josh. xix. 34) was the boundary "toward the sun-rising" of the tribe of Naphthali—*i.e.*, it answered to what was afterwards known as Gaulonitis, and is now known as the *Jolan.* Josephus (*Wars*, iii. 3) expressly enumerates Gaulonitis as belonging to Judæa in the time of our Lord. For the explanation of this spread of the name, which has always been a geographical crux, see von Raumer's argument in Dr. Caspari's summary (*Chron. and Geogr., Introd.*, Eng. Trans., p. 90). We have to think, then, probably of Bethania or *Tellanihje*, to the north of the Sea of Galilee, on the eastern side of the Jordan, as the place of our Lord's retirement. He had taught the Jews by divine words, and they had sought to stone Him (verse 31, and chap. viii. 59). He had appealed to divine works, and they had attempted to take Him by force (verse 39, and chap. vii. 30, 32, 44). He sees in all this the darkness which foreshadows the night, and He retires from the city to visit it no more until the final Passover, when the night will be at hand. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

**And there he abode.**—How long we have no means of judging. The time from Dedication to Passover (December to April) is divided, by the visit to Bethany near Jerusalem, and the raising of Lazarus, into two parts of uncertain duration, one of which is spent in Gaulonitis and the other in Ephraim (chap. xi. 54).

(41) **And many resorted unto him.**—It is one of the key-notes of this Gospel, struck in its opening words (see Note on chap. i. 5), and recurring at frequent intervals, that in the midst of even the deepest darkness the light is never absent. In contrast with the rejection at Jerusalem there is the reception on the old ground, which brings memories of early days and bright hopes, which are not without their fulfilment now. The mission of the Seventy, and Christ's own work in Galilee before the Feast of the Dedication (comp. Note on verse 22), accounts for the number who now come to Him.

**And said, John did no miracle: but all things . . .**—Better, as before, *John did no sign* . . . This was not said to Him, but was a general remark suggested by the associations of the spot. The remark assigns to John the position as a witness which he claimed for himself, and which the Evangelist has made prominent in the narrative of His work. He did no sign, and therefore came short of the glory of Him whose signs they had seen and heard of; but more than any other he had recognised that glory, and directed men to it. His spiritual intuition, in advance of the generation in which he lived, was itself a sign, and all things which he had said about the Messiah had, in the events which had taken place since they had seen Him that John spake of this man were true. (42) And many believed on him there.

CHAPTER XI.—(1) Now a certain *man* was sick, *named* Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. (2) (It was *that* Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment,[a] and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) (3) Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. (4) When Jesus heard *that*, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

A.D. 33.

a Matt. 26. 7.

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in that place before, been proved to be true. The witness of the past is linked to that of the present. The enthusiasm which John had kindled still burns.

(42) **And many believed on him there.**—The word "there" is, in the best texts, in a position of emphasis. "And *there* many believed on Him." It marks the contrast between the rejection in Jerusalem and the reception at Bethania.

XI.

[(3) LIFE, TRUTH, LIGHT, AND LOVE MORE FULLY MANIFESTED. CORRESPONDING INCREASE OF THE UNBELIEF OF THE JEWS (chaps. xi. 1—xii. 50).

(*a*) *Lazarus restored to life* (chap. xi. 1—46).

(α) The journey to Bethany. Sleep and death (verses 1—16).

(β) The interview with Martha. The Resurrection and the Life (verses 17—27).

(γ) The interview with Mary. Sorrow and love (verses 28—38).

(δ) The open sepulchre. The corruptible and incorruption (verses 39—46).]

(1) **Now a certain man was sick.**—This is connected with the preceding narrative to introduce the reason for our Lord's leaving His retirement to go again into the neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

**Named Lazarus, of Bethany.**—For the name "Lazarus," comp. Note on Luke xvi. 20, where it occurs as the solitary instance of a name in our Lord's parables. It will be seen from the *Chronological Harmony of the Gospels*, p. xxxvi., that the parable was closely connected with the miracle in order of time. It is in every way probable that the form in which the truths of the world beyond the grave there took shape was suggested by the incidents which are here recorded. See also the suggestion that this Lazarus may have been identical with the young man that had great possessions, in Notes on Matt. xix. 16 *et seq.* The induction rests upon an enumeration of instances which makes it at least probable in a high degree.

"Bethany," too, is familiar to us from the earlier Gospels (Matt. xxi. 17; xxvi. 6; Mark xi. 12; xiv. 3; Luke xix. 29; xxiv. 50). The modern name, *El-Azirieh*, or *El-Lazirieh*, connects it with the events of this chapter, being formed from *El-Azir*, the Arabic form of the name Lazarus. It is a poor village on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, about two miles from Jerusalem (verse 18).

**The town of Mary and her sister Martha.**—Better, *the village* . . . (Comp. Luke x. 38.) This is the general meaning of the Greek word, which is distinguished from that for "city" or "town," as in Matt. ix. 35, x. 11; but John uses it in chap. vii. 42 for Bethlehem. For the relative position of Mary and Martha, comp. Notes on Luke x. 38—42. The younger sister is here mentioned first as the better known from the events related in verse 2. Lazarus was probably younger than his sisters (chap. xii. 2). The village was known, then, in the circles of the first disciples, as the village of Mary and Martha, by way of distinction from the "Bethany beyond Jordan"; and the distinction is marked here on account of the paragraph at the end of the preceding chapter. (See chap. i. 28.)

(2) **It was that Mary which anointed the Lord.**—Comp. Notes on Matt. xxvi. 6 *et seq.*, and Mark xiv. 3 *et seq.* John himself relates the anointing in chap. xii. 3 *et seq.* Here he simply mentions it as distinguishing Mary from others of the same name, and assumes it as a well-known incident which had been, as Christ declared it should be, "told for a memorial of her wheresoever the gospel had been preached" (Matt. xxvi. 13). Still, the other Evangelists had not told the name, and St. John, when the name first occurs in his narrative, connects it with the person whose deed of love was known to all.

There is no sufficient reason for identifying Mary of Bethany with the "woman which was a sinner" (see Notes on Luke vii. 37 *et seq.*), or for identifying either with Mary Magdalene.

This verse should not be placed in parenthesis, as in our version. It is immediately connected with the verse which precedes, as well as with that which follows.

(3) **Therefore his sisters sent unto him.**—Better, *The sisters therefore sent unto Him*—*i.e.*, because of the fact of the illness, which has been repeated at the close of the last verse, and also because of the intimacy between our Lord and this family, of which the anointing was a proof. (Comp. verse 5.)

**Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.**—The words are given in the touching simplicity of the message just as they were sent by the sorrowing sisters. They feel that the sad news needs no addition, and that there is no necessity for a prayer for help. Weakness, conscious of strength which loves, needs but to utter itself. (Comp. verse 21.)

(4) **When Jesus heard that, he said.**—These words are not simply an answer sent to the sisters, but the uttered thought which arose in our Lord's mind as He heard that Lazarus was ill, and were spoken in the presence of the disciples who were with Him, and doubtless in that of the messengers also.

**This sickness is not unto death**—*i.e.*, "will not issue in death: will not have death as its final result." (Comp. verses 11 and 14, and chap. viii. 5.)

**But for the glory of God**—*i.e.*, "the furtherance and accomplishment of the glory of God."

**That the Son of God might be glorified thereby.**—This furtherance of the glory of God with the purpose of glorifying the Son carries us back, as all the expositors note, to the oneness of the work of the Father and Son which has been made prominent in our Lord's words. (Comp. chap. x. 38, and references in Note there.) But the words seem to carry us forwards as well as backwards. In the next chapter (verse 23) our Lord says, "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified," and the reference is

(5) Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. (6) When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was. (7) Then after that saith he to *his* disciples, Let us go into Judæa again. (8) *His* disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again? (9) Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. (10) But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him. (11) These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake

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to His death. Is that thought absent from the words here? The sickness of Lazarus would not indeed issue in death, though it would end in what men call death, and would be the immediate cause leading to the death of the Son of Man. The one would be as a sleep from which he would awake, the other should be the glorifying the Son of God, which would issue in the life of the world.

"Thereby" is probably to be interpreted "by means of the illness," not "by means of the glory."

This verse should be compared with chap. ix. 3. Here, as there, part of the meaning is that the glory of God would be effected in the person of him upon whom the miracle would be wrought. It was a spiritual crisis in the case of the man born blind. It cannot have been otherwise in the case of Lazarus.

(5) **Now Jesus loved Martha.**—It is not easy to see the connection of this verse with that which precedes, or with that which immediately follows. The fact of His abiding two days where He was, seems indeed opposed to the thought of His special love for the family. The most probable explanation is that which connects verses 5, 6, and 7 together, and makes the love the motive for going into Judæa again.

The word rendered "loved" here is different from that in verse 3. There the word signifies the love of tender affection; here the word means the love of chosen friendship. (Comp. chaps. xx. 2 and xxi. 15 *et seq.*) The difference here is not to be explained, as it frequently has been, by the difference in the persons who were the objects of the love; but by the difference of the persons whose words we read. In the language of the sisters, whose hearts are moved by the brother's illness, the word of fullest emotion is natural. In the language of the Evangelist the other word is no less so.

It will be observed that in this verse, as in verse 19 *et seq.*, Martha takes the first place as the elder sister.

(6) **When he had heard therefore.**—Better, *When He heard therefore* . . .

**He abode two days still.**—It is usual to explain this delay as caused by His wish to test the faith of the sisters, or by the nature of the work which He was then doing, and was unwilling to leave. But the first reason passes over the fact that their faith had been shown in their message to Him; and the second postulates His presence at Bethany as necessary for the restoration of Lazarus. (Comp. chap. iv. 49, 50.) A juster view is that which remembers the principle which He had taught at the first miracle (chap. ii. 4), that the hours of His work were marked out by signs that He alone could read, but that every hour had its work, and every work its hour. (Comp. verses 4 and 9, and chap. ix. 3, 4.)

A comparison with verse 11 makes it certain that Lazarus was dead before they set out for Judæa, but he was living when the words of verse 4 were spoken. The fact of death may have determined the hour of their departure.

(7) **Let us go into Judæa again.**—He does not mark out the place more definitely, and the word "again" recalls the dangers from which they had escaped at the close of their last visit to Jerusalem.

(8) **Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee.**—Better, *Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone Thee.* (Comp. Notes on chaps. i. 39 and x. 31.) They think of the danger to Him, and are not without thought of the danger to themselves (verse 16). It shows that the hatred of the Jews had now made it unsafe for our Lord and His disciples to be within their reach. The impression we derive from this verse is that the retirement into Gaulonitis had been of no long duration, when the message from Bethany came to interrupt it.

(9) **Are there not twelve hours in the day?**—Or more exactly, *Are not the hours of the day twelve?* They had expressed their fears that danger and death would be the result of going into Judæa. His answer would say that the darkness of the night which they dreaded could not come yet. The natural night would come not until its appointed hour, until the twelve hours of the day had run their course. The day of His life is marked out by limits no less sure. The night indeed cometh, but it is as yet full day, and in that day He and they must do the work which is appointed of the Father. (Comp. verse 6; and Notes on chaps. ii. 4; vii. 30; viii. 20; ix. 4; xii. 27; xvii. 1.)

Incidentally these words bear on the question of St. John's method of counting the hours of the day, and support the view which from other passages seems quite evident that he follows the ordinary Babylonian numeration. (Comp. Notes on chaps. i. 40; iv. 6, 52; xix. 14.)

**Because he seeth the light of this world**—*i.e.*, the natural light of the sun. While the earth is illumined by it, men follow the course of their work without danger of stumbling. In the application to their own position, the truth holds good. The day of His work is illumined by the light of heaven, and for Him and them there is safety.

(10) **But if a man walk in the night . . .**—He passes in this verse from the material to the spiritual truth. This first clause still holds of the natural night, and the danger to men who walk in it, but it holds, too, of the darkness in which men walk who do not see, as He is seeing, the light of heaven falling upon the moral path. In the second clause the moral truth is expressed with a prominence which excludes the other.

**Because there is no light in him.**—The light is now not that "of this world," but that which is within man.

(11) **Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.**—Better, *Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep.* They had probably understood the words of verse 4 to express that the illness was not mortal, and that Lazarus would recover. They have seen, therefore, no reason for facing the danger of Judæa (verses 7 and 8). He now supplies

him out of sleep. (12) Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. (13) Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. (14) Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. (15) And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him. (16) Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

(17) Then when Jesus came, he found

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that reason, and for the first time speaks of going to the family at Bethany.

His words "our friend" gently remind them that Lazarus was their friend as well as His, for they as well as He had probably been welcome guests in the well-known house.

The fact of our Lord's knowledge of the death of Lazarus is stated by St. John without any explanation. From his point of view it could need none. He who needed not that any should testify of man, because of His own self-knowledge of what was in man (chap. ii. 25), needed not that any should testify of what had passed in the chamber of His friend.

For the idea of sleep as the image of death, comp. Notes on chap. viii. 51, Matt. ix. 24, and 1 Thess. iv. 14. It is not unfrequent in other passages of both the Old and New Testaments, and, from the time of Homer downwards, poets have spoken of sleep and death as twin-sisters.

(12) **Then said his disciples.**—Better, *Therefore* . . . Their remark immediately arises out of what our Lord has said. They are glad to catch at any reason for not going to Judæa.

**If he sleep, he shall do well.**—More exactly, *If he be fallen asleep, he shall be saved.* There could be, therefore, no reason for His going, as the disease had passed the crisis. Sleep is given by the Rabbis as one of six favourable symptoms, and that it is so is a common-place in authors of all periods. From the apparent suddenness of the attack, and rapidity of the progress of the disease, it would seem to have been the "great fever" which was common in Palestine (comp. chap. iv. 52, and especially Note on Luke iv. 38), and in which sleep would be the sign that the fever had ceased.

(13) **They thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.**—These words forbid the thought that they really understood that Lazarus was dead, but did not wish to seem to know it. Three of them, indeed, had heard our Lord apply the word "sleep" to death before (Matt. ix. 24), but this instance of misunderstanding on their part takes its place with others of a like kind, as showing that the surface-meaning of words was that which naturally suggested itself to them. (Comp. Matt. xvi. 6—12, and Luke xxii. 38.) It is not likely that all "the three" were present during this interview. If it took place at *Tellanihje*, then the nearness of Bethsaida and the other towns of Galilee may have led some of the Twelve to visit their old homes. (Comp. chap. i. 28 and 48 *et seq.*) We can hardly imagine that Peter was present without taking a prominent part in the conversation, or that Thomas would have been in his presence the representative speaker (verse 16). His absence may be taken as one of the reasons why the account of the miracle which follows is absent from St. Mark's Gospel, which is, like St. John's, the Gospel of an eye-witness. (Comp. *Introduction to St. Mark*, p. 189, and *Excursus E: The Omission of the Raising of Lazarus, in the Synoptic Gospels.*)

(14) **Lazarus is dead.**—The words of deeper truth, "Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep," have conveyed no true meaning to their minds. He uses words, therefore, which fall short of that truth, but are the only words which they can understand.

(15) **And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there.**—The words are at first sound startling, as following immediately upon the plain statement, "Lazarus is dead." The utterance is not of sorrow, but of joy; but the joy is not at the fact of death, but at the fact that He was not there. Had He been there, Lazarus would not have died (verses 21 and 32), and his recovery would have added to the work of healing. There is the assured consciousness of power over death itself, which sees as present all that is to follow, and sees in the strengthening of their faith ground for joy.

**To the intent ye may believe.**—They were already disciples, but this sign would be to them the vehicle of a higher spiritual truth, and the growth of their spiritual life would be such that it may be regarded as a new act of faith. (Comp. Note on chap. ii. 11.)

**Nevertheless let us go unto him.**—The thought of the final issue of the sleep brings the whole future before the mind. But for this, His presence is needed at Bethany, and He abruptly breaks off this conversation about it, by what is at once a resolution and a summons to go there.

(16) **Then** (or, better, *therefore*) **said Thomas, which is called Didymus.**—The second of these names is the Greek translation of the first, which is Hebrew. Both mean "twin." Both are found together again in chaps. xx. 24 and xxi. 2. Comp. Notes on the Catalogues of the Apostles in Matt. x. 3, Mark iii. 18, Luke vi. 15, in all of which he is coupled with Matthew, whose twin-brother he possibly was; and in Acts i. 13, where he is coupled with Philip. The name belonged probably to his childhood, and we are wholly without the knowledge which can explain it. The various theories which attempt to do so, from the statement of the Apostolical Constitutions that he had a twin sister Lydia, to the view that the name was given by our Lord to signify his double or halting spiritual nature, are never more than, and are sometimes much less than, elaborate guesses. We may well believe that the name is due to the fact that he was a twin, but of whom it is of no importance that we should know, and it is quite certain that we cannot know.

And yet Peter, John, and Judas, are the only Apostles whose characters we know as well. This is owing to three incidents preserved to us by St. John—the present passage, chap. xiv. 5, and chap. xx. 24 *et seq.* We have before us here a man looking at events from a mind full of the darkest apprehension. He is without hope that a return to Judæa can have any but one issue for his Master. The night is so clearly seen that the brightness of day is obscured. But with all this there is the full love of a devoted disciple, who will follow his Master even unto death.

(17) **Then when Jesus came**—*i.e.*, to the neighbourhood of Bethany. He did not at once enter the village itself (verses 20, 30).

that he had *lain* in the grave four days already. (18) Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:[1] (19) and many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. (20) Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat *still* in the house. (21) Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. (22) But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give *it* thee. (23) Jesus saith unto her, Thy

[1] That is, *about two miles.*

**He found that he had lain in the grave four days already.**—The Jewish custom was to bury on the day of death. (Comp. Acts v. 6—10.) The whole tone of the narrative places the time of death at the point indicated by the summons to go into Judæa, in verse 7 (see Note there). Counting the parts of the days on which they set out and on which they arrived as included in the four days, in accordance with the Jewish method, we have two whole days and parts of two other days spent upon the journey. There is no indication that they halted on the way, but everything suggests rather that they went as quickly as possible. The common view, which supposes the place where John was baptising to have been on the southern Jordan, cannot be made consistent with this long journey; and it is usual to assume that Lazarus died on the day that the message reached the Lord, that after his death our Lord remained two days where He was, and that the fourth day was occupied on the journey to Bethany. It is believed that the meaning of the narrative is brought out more fully by the interpretation which has been followed above, and that the four days for the journey is perfectly natural on the supposition which has been adopted, that the journey was from *Tellanihje*, which was north of the Sea of Galilee.

(18) **Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem.**—This way of speaking of places in the past tense is not found in the other Gospels. (Comp., in this Gospel, chaps. xviii. 1 and xix. 41; and, on the other hand, Note on chap. v. 2.) The explanation may be that from St. John's point of view, writing after the destruction of Jerusalem, the buildings and gardens could no longer be described as still existing.

**About fifteen furlongs off.**—The Greek stadium which is here rendered "furlong" was 606¾ English feet. The distance was, then, as the margin gives it, not much short of two English miles. This is mentioned to account for the fact stated in the following verse, that many of the Jews came to comfort Martha and Mary.

(19) **And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary.**—Better, *and many of the Jews had come . . .*—They had come before our Lord's arrival. The word "Jews" is to be understood in St. John's general sense (comp. Note on chap. i. 19) of those opposed to our Lord, who had lately sought to stone Him (chap. x. 31), and afterwards to take Him by force (chap. x. 39). The family at Bethany was one of position and substance (comp. Notes on Matt. xxvi. 6—13; Mark xiv. 3—9), and they would naturally have had many friends among the higher rank of the Jews. Another reading, which has considerable authority, is "had come to the women with Martha and Mary," or "to Martha and Mary and their friends."

**To comfort them concerning their brother.**—The days of mourning were usually thirty, which were divided into (1) three days of weeping; (2) seven days of lamentation; (3) twenty days of sorrow. This fourth day after the death was the first of the seven days of lamentation. Lightfoot has collected, in a long note on this text, quotations from the Rabbis illustrating the mourning customs, and giving examples of the words used.

(20) **Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming . . .**—This is partly to be explained from the position in which they stood towards Him, and partly from the fact of the presence of the Jews at the house. She goes forth to meet Him in a place where she can speak her heart's thoughts, apart from the oppressive ceremonial of the formal lamentation, and where He would not be exposed to a renewal of the attempts against His life.

**But Mary sat still in the house.**—Better, without the word in italics, *but Mary was sitting in the house.* The characteristics of the two sisters, which we find in Luke x. 38 (see Note there), are strikingly preserved in this narrative. The clause describes precisely the position of the mourner, who sat on or near the ground, while those who came to lament with her sat around. (Comp. Job xix. 25.)

(21) **Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.**—We have exactly the same words spoken by Mary in verse 32. They are the utterance of the thought which had already been expressed in their message (verse 7), and had, we may think, been spoken more than once by the sisters to each other. These sisters are among the many who had received our Lord in the fulness of a true faith, of whom the Gospel narrative tells us nothing, or gives us, as here, but a passing glimpse. Their belief is stated in the definiteness of full conviction; but they, like the courtier, connect the power to save with the bodily presence of our Lord. (Comp. chap. iv. 49.)

(22) **But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God . . .**—The words express a half-formed hope, which she dare not utter, perhaps dare not even think, that her brother may be restored to life again. She had heard probably of the young maid whose body was reanimated by the life which had but just left it (comp. Mark v. 35 *et seq.*; Luke viii. 41, 42), and of the young man whose body was being carried to the grave, when at His command it was restored living to the widowed mother. (Comp. Luke vii. 11 *et seq.*) Her brother had been the friend of Jesus; they had all trusted in His power and His love. Words had come to them from Him telling that this sickness should not issue in death, but that it should further God's glory and glorify the Son. And now He is Himself present. His words cannot fail, and He Himself cannot be there without a purpose. She dare not say more; but she rests in this, that there is unity of power and will between Him and the Father. Whatsoever He asks, God will give.

(23) **Thy brother shall rise again.**—These words, spoken as they were by our Lord after the purpose of His journey, as expressed in verse 11, and immediately before the accomplishment of it, cannot be taken to exclude the restoration of Lazarus to physical life. At the same time, the form of the words clearly point, as Martha understood them to point, to "the

brother shall rise again. (24) Martha said unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.[a] (25) Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life:[b] he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: (26) and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? (27) She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. (28) And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. (29) As soon as she heard *that,* she arose quickly, and came unto him. (30) Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him. (31) The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when

[a] Luke 14. 14; ch. 5. 20.
[b] ch. 6. 35.

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resurrection at the last day." They are chosen for this very purpose; to lead her from the passionate longing for her brother's restoration, and from a vague thought of the Lord's power and will to restore him, to a wider and truer conception of what life really is, and to a realisation of the truth that for a true believer in Him there can be no such thing as death. This "sign," like every other, is to be no mere wonder, nor is it to be limited to our restored life. It is to lead to the spiritual truth which is signified; and is to be for them and for mankind the true conquest of death by Life.

(24) **I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection . . .**—Her answer expresses something of disappointment. Her whole heart had been fixed on one thought, and in all that had passed her hopes had found a support which seemed to warrant the hope for its accomplishment. She is now reminded of a general truth which she had rested in before, but this does not satisfy the expectation she had formed now. We have all felt something of her disappointment as we have stood beside the sepulchre. We have known, with a knowledge more full than hers, that "he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day;" but this knowledge has often had little power to remove the deep sorrow of the heart. We conquer the pagan thought "lost for ever"; but we are often conquered by the thought "lost for the present."

For the thought of the resurrection, comp. Notes on chap. v. 29 and Luke xiv. 14. The Pharisees expected the resurrection of the just to accompany the Messianic advent. (Comp. Dan. xii. 2 and 2 Macc. vii. 9.) Still, the answer is in advance of that which we should expect, as compared with the dimness which rests upon even the fullest expression with regard to the resurrection in the Old Testament, and is to be traced to earlier lessons she had received from Him who is teaching her now.

(25) **I am the resurrection, and the life.**—She has spoken of the resurrection as a truth which she believes, and as an event in the far-off future, so remote from the present life indeed, as to be powerless to comfort her now. The two first words of His answer, expressed in the fulness of emphasis, teach her that the resurrection is to be thought of as His person, and that it is to be thought of as actually present. "*I,*"—his words mean—"and none beside Me, am the Resurrection. I *am* the Resurrection—a present life, and not simply a life in the remoteness of the last day." In the same sense in which He has declared Himself to be the Water of Life and the Bread of Life, supplying in Himself every need of spiritual thirst and spiritual hunger, He declares Himself to be the Resurrection, revealing in His own person all that men had ever thought and hoped of a future life, being Himself the power which shall raise them at the last day, and could therefore raise them now. This is because He is also "the Life," and therefore every one in communion with Him shall live.

**He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.**—Better, *though he have died . . .* She thinks and speaks of Lazarus as dead. He asserts that in the true thought of the spiritual life the fact of physical death does not interrupt that life.

(26) **And whosoever liveth and believeth in me.**—This is to be understood of the physical life answering to "though he have died" of the last verse.

**Shall never die.**—Comp. especially Note on chap. viii. 51. He *shall by no means die for ever.* Not through the infinite course of ages shall there be that which makes for him the sting of death. The fact of what we call physical death is not denied, but in the fulness of the thought of life it is regarded as the passage to a new and higher life.

(27) **She saith unto him, Yea, Lord.**—This is her assent to the question He asked. She believed all that He had told her. It is not that she expresses her belief, in answer to His question, in the remainder of this verse. The answer is simply "Yea, Lord." Then she proceeds to give the foundation on which that answer rested.

**I believe that thou art the Christ.**—The word means, "I have believed, and do now;" "I have convinced myself, and do believe." But this being so, convinced that He is the Messiah, she has in that conviction the ground for believing all that He has now taught her of Resurrection and Life.

(28) **And called Mary her sister secretly.**—It was done secretly to avoid attracting the notice of the Jews who were with her (verses 19, 31). This, we have seen (verse 20), accounts for the fact that our Lord did not Himself go to the house. That the care was not unnecessary is seen from verse 46.

**The Master is come** (better, *is here*), **and calleth for thee.**—The word here rendered "Master" is not the Hebrew Rabbi (comp. Note on chap. i. 38), but the Greek word answering to our "Teacher." (Comp. chap. xiii. 13, 14.) He is not named, but Mary at once knows who is intended. (Comp. Mark xiv. 14.) Perhaps the name was that by which they usually spoke of Him who had been their Teacher. We are not told that our Lord sent for Mary, but we must assume that Martha conveyed the message which she herself had heard.

(29) **She arose quickly.**—She was sitting in the house (verse 20), after the manner of mourners. The news she now hears tells her that their true Comforter was at hand, and she at once goes forth to meet Him.

(30) **Now Jesus was not yet come into the town.**—Better, as before, *into the village* (verse 1).

**Where Martha met him.**—Comp. verse 20.

(31) **And comforted her.**—Better, *were comforting her—i.e.,* were engaged in the prescribed ceremonial of those who were called comforters.

they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there. (32) Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. (33) When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,[1] (34) and said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. (35) Jesus wept. (36) Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! (37) And some of them said, Could not

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[1] Gr. *he troubled himself.*

**Saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.**—The better reading is, *thinking, She goeth . . .* The practice was and is common among the Orientals, as well as among other nations.

Their following her, defeats the object Martha had in view in calling her secretly. We may say, also, that it defeated our Lord's object in remaining outside the village; but this is not inconsistent with His knowing that it would be so.

(32) **Lord, if thou hadst been here.**—The words are precisely the same as those which Martha had uttered (verse 21). She adds no more. It may be that she was prevented doing so by the presence of the Jews; but the next verse suggests rather that her emotion was too powerful for words, and that the only possible language was that of a suppliant lying at His feet and weeping.

(33) **He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.**—The word rendered "groaned" occurs, besides in this verse and verse 38, three times in the New Testament; in Matthew ix. 30 ("and Jesus straitly charged them"); Mark i. 43 ("and He straitly charged him"); and xiv. 5 ("and they murmured against her"). Comp. Notes at these places. The original meaning of the word is "to snort, as of horses." Passing to the moral sense, it expresses disturbance of the mind—vehement agitation. This may express itself in sharp admonition, in words of anger against a person, or in a physical shudder, answering to the intensity of the emotion. In each of the passages in the earlier Gospels the word is accompanied by an object upon which the feeling is directed. In the present context it does not go beyond the subject of the feeling. Here it is "in the spirit" (comp. chap. xiii. 21); and in verse 38 it is "in Himself." Both mean the same thing; and point to the inner moral depth of His righteous indignation; the object of it, however, is not expressed.

For the rendering "and was troubled" the margin gives, as the exact force of the Greek, "and He troubled Himself"; and this is to be preferred. These words do not express the inner emotion; for that has been expressed in the strong words which have gone before. They point rather to the physical movement which accompanied the emotion, and made known to others the indignation which was excited in His own spirit. The force of the whole sentence would require, in English, some such rendering as "He was indignant in the spirit, and caused Himself to shudder."

Very different views have been put forth as to the cause of this intensity of emotion in our Lord. The cause supplied by the text is that He saw Mary lying at His feet weeping; and the Jews also weeping which came with her. Real sorrow, which calls forth all His sympathy, is accompanied by the mockery of sorrow, which can shed tears for the brother, whom they afterwards seek to kill (chap. xii. 10)! These Jews are those who had sought to stone their Teacher, and had resolved to cut off from all religious and social intercourse every one who acknowledged Him as the Messiah! With hearts full of hatred they can profess to be comforters, and can mingle their tears with hers. The severest words that fell from the lips of Christ were those which denounced the hypocrisy of priests, Pharisees, and scribes. It is this hypocrisy which now stirs in His spirit an anger so intense that it causes nerve and muscle and limb to tremble beneath its force.

(34) **Where have ye laid him?**—The question is directed, of course, to the sisters. This is further shown by the answer, "Lord, come and see." Both question and answer are expressed in the shortest form. Grief speaks in the fewest possible words.

(35) **Jesus wept.**—The word is different from that which is used to express weeping in verse 33; but this latter is used of our Lord in Luke xix. 41. The present word means not the cry of lamentation, nor the wail of excessive grief, but the calm shedding of tears. They are on the way to the sepulchre, near to which they have now arrived. He is conscious of the power which He is about to exercise, and that the first result will be the glory of God (verse 4); but He is conscious also of the suffering hearts near Him, and the sympathy with human sorrow is no less part of His nature than the union with divine strength. Men have wondered to find in the Gospel which opens with the express declaration of the divinity of our Lord, and at a moment when that divinity was about to receive its fullest manifestation, these words, which point them still to human weakness. But the central thought of St. John's Gospel is "The Word was made flesh," and He is for us the Resurrection and the Life, because He has been manifested to us, not as an abstraction which the intellect only could receive, but as a person, living a human life, and knowing its sorrows, whom the heart can grasp and love. A "God in tears" has provoked the smile of the stoic and the scorn of the unbeliever; but Christianity is not a gospel of self-sufficiency, and its message is not merely to the human intellect. It is salvation for the whole man and for every man; and the sorrowing heart of humanity has never seen more clearly the divinity of the Son of Man than when it has seen His glory shining through His human tears.

(36) **Then said the Jews**—*i.e.*, part of them. (See the next verse.) The term "Jews" is repeated with a frequency (verses 31 and 33) which makes prominent their hostile position.

**Behold how he loved him!**—Or, more exactly, *how He used to love him.* The word used is the strong word for love which the sisters had themselves used in verse 3. "How He must have loved him," they think, "during his life, if He thus sheds tears for him after his death!"

(37) **And some of them said.**—Better, *But some of them said*—*i.e.*, another party of the Jews, differing from those mentioned in the last verse.

**Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind . . ?**—They refer to the greatest miracle this man, which opened the eyes of the blind,[a] have caused that even this man should not have died? (38) Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. (39) Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been *dead* four days. (40) Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? (41) Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *his* eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. (42) And I knew that thou

[a] ch. 9. 6.

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which had taken place within the limits of their own knowledge. The other miracles of raising the dead they must have heard of, but had not believed. What they think of here is not raising the dead, but the possibility of preventing death; and their question is meant to imply that He could not have prevented this death. If He could, surely He would have done so for one whom He had loved, and would have come at once, instead of waiting until death had taken place. The inference they would draw is that, after all, the present failure is a proof that He did not open the eyes of the blind.

(38) **Jesus therefore again groaning in himself.**—See Note on verse 33. Their evil thoughts, expressed in verse 37, are the cause of this new emotion of anger.

**Cometh to the grave.**—Comp. verse 31. Here, as there, it would be better to render it *sepulchre.* The same word occurs again in chaps. xii. 17; xix. 41, 42; xx. 1—11.

**It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.**—The sepulchres were dug in the rock, either vertically, with an entrance from above (comp. Note on Luke xi. 44), or horizontally, with an entrance from the side, and were frequently adaptations of natural caves. (Comp. Note on Matt. xxvii. 60.) Such sepulchres remain to the present day, and travellers are shown one which is said to be that of Lazarus. The entrance is from above it by twenty-six steps; and this must have been so, if we press the words "lay upon it." The original words, however, may certainly apply to the horizontal slab which closes the entrance to the sepulchre; and the identification of this particular sepulchre is to be received with caution. The fact of the body being laid in a sepulchre agrees with the general tone of the narrative that the family was one of substance.

(39) **Martha, the sister of him that was dead.**—This fact of close relationship is mentioned again to account for her remark. We know, from the whole narrative, that she was his sister; but this verse would say, not simply that Martha spoke, but that that in Martha which was sister to him who was dead spoke. She thinks that the form of him she loved has now passed to corruption; she cannot bear that her own eyes or the eyes of others should see it.

**For he hath been dead four days.**—The word "dead" is not expressed in the Greek, which says literally, *for he hath been of the fourth day;* and the thought is rather of the sepulchre than of death—"for he hath been in the sepulchre four days." (Comp. verse 17.) The body had been embalmed (verse 44); but the manner of the Jews was to embalm only with spice, and to wrap in linen clothes (chap. xix. 40—42), and there is no evidence that they at any time followed the Egyptian method of embalming. The only instance of Jewish embalming mentioned in the Old Testament is that of Asa (2 Chron. xvi. 14).

The fact that the body had been in the sepulchre four days is given by the sister as a proof that decomposition must have taken place, and expositors have generally assumed that it was so. This is, however, not stated in the text, and the assumption is opposed by the fact that there was an interval during which the sepulchre was open, and Jesus prayed to the Father (verses 41, 42).

(40) **If thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God.**—He takes her back to the promise which she had heard from the messengers (verse 4), and which had led to her brightest hopes, and reminds her too of His own teaching and her own faith (verses 21—27). Her last remark had more of the human and less of the divine than was contained in her earliest words (verse 22). Then her faith had reached "whatsoever Thou shalt ask"; and later she had accepted the truth, "He that believeth in Me, though he have died, yet shall he live." "Let her hold fast to this faith," His words would now say, in a gentleness that is yet not wholly without rebuke, "and she shall see the glory of God." By this more is meant than the restoration of Lazarus to physical life. That was seen by those who did not believe; for her it should be a sign, teaching that He is the Resurrection and the Life.

(41) **Then they took away the stone.**—This could be done without difficulty, for it would be nothing more than a rough slab placed at the entrance of the cave, to prevent the approach of jackals or other beasts of prey.

**From the place where the dead was laid** is omitted by all the better MSS. It is an unnecessary gloss, to explain what stone is meant.

**And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said . . .**—His attitude, as well as His words, is meant to express that the work which He is about to do, is one of the works from His Father.

**I thank thee that thou hast heard me.**—Better, *I thank Thee that Thou didst hear Me;* the time referred to being that of the offering of the prayer. Of this we have no notice. It was the will of the Son expressing itself in moral harmony with the will of the Father. "I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me" (chap. v. 30; comp. chap. xii. 27, 28), and therefore in the expression receiving the answer. The promise of verse 4 was the utterance of the divine will to the disciples and the messengers, and we are, it may be, to think of that moment as the time of its realisation by the Son.

This thanksgiving for the answer to His prayer has been uttered aloud in the presence of the multitude. The verse which follows was spoken to prevent a misunderstanding on the part of the disciples and in all times.

(42) **And I knew that thou hearest me always.**—The meaning depends upon the emphatic position of the pronoun, "*I,* for My part, knew." "It is not for My own sake that I speak these words." This union

hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said *it*, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. (43) And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. (44) And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

(45) Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him. (46) But some of them went

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of the will of the Father and the Son, by which every prayer of the Son was an expression of the will of the Father, and every work of the Father was in harmony with the will of the Son, was not exceptional, but the law of His human life. There is ever the consciousness, "I and My Father are one" (chap. x. 29).

**But because of the people which stand by I said it.**—Better, *because of the multitude.* He had before instructed the disciples and the sisters. He would instruct the multitude also, so that to them this "miracle" may be more than a wonder, and may teach them that He is sent of God. (Comp. Notes on chaps. ix. 29, 31; x. 21.)

That which He said must be the words "I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me." Some have referred them to the words of verse 4, but this is in itself improbable, and is besides excluded by the reference to the multitude.

**That they may believe that thou hast sent me.**—The pronoun is again emphatic. His words mean "That *Thou* and none beside Thee." They had ascribed the sight given to the blind to deceit, or the work of a demon. This sign is preceded by a thanksgiving to the God of heaven in the presence of them all. It is a solemn appeal, proving His divinity at once by the confidence in which He utters it, and by the answer which Heaven gives to it.

(43) **He cried with a loud voice.**—Comp. chap. v. 25, 28, and Notes there. These verses lead to the opinion that it was at the moment of the cry, and not before, as some have thought, that life returned. This is the only passage where the word rendered "cried" is used of our Lord. (Comp. Matt. xii. 19.) It occurs again in this Gospel in chaps. xii. 13; xviii. 40; xix. 6, 12, 50.

**Lazarus, come forth.**—He addresses him as we should address a friend whom we wished to arouse from sleep, by his name, the most familiar of all sounds, and marking his personality. (Comp. chap. xx. 16.) Literally, the Greek means, *Lazarus, Hither, out!* and contains no verb. There is a fitness in them as addressed to one already lying in the sepulchre. Comp. "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise" (Luke vii. 15), and "Maid, arise" (Luke viii. 54).

(44) **And he that was dead came forth.**—"Wonder at a wonder within a wonder!" is Basil's comment on these words; and many of the older expositors regard the power to move, when bound hand and foot, as itself a miracle. But this seems not to be necessary, and if not necessary, is not to be resorted to. (Comp. Note on chap. vi. 21.) The grave-clothes may have been bound round the limbs separately, as in the Egyptian mummies, and this would not prevent motion; or (and this is more probable) the body may have been "wrapped in a linen cloth," which encompassed the whole, except the head (Matt. xxvii. 59), but still left motion possible. The word rendered "grave-clothes" is used nowhere in the New Testament except in this passage. It means properly the bands or straps by which the linen sheet was fastened to the body, and which kept the spice from falling out. (Comp. chap. xix. 40.) We find it used elsewhere for straps and thongs generally. They were made of rushes, linen, and other materials. The word is used once in the Greek of the Old Testament, where it means the belts by which beds are girded (Prov. vii. 16).

**And his face was bound about with a napkin.**—For the word "napkin," comp. Note on Luke xix. 20. It means here the cloth placed round the forehead and under the chin, but probably not covering the face.

**Loose him, and let him go.**—This command is in itself strong proof that the earlier part of the verse is not to be interpreted as a narrative of miraculous incidents.

(45) **Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen . . .**—Better, *Many therefore of the Jews, which had come to Mary and seen . . .* The comma should be placed after the word Jews. The Greek cannot mean, "Then many of the Jews, *i.e.*, *of those* which came to Mary." It must mean, "Many therefore of the Jews, *i.e.*, *all those* which had come to Mary." The miracle is so utterly beyond all their conceptions that it carries conviction to every heart, and leaves no further possibility of doubt. They are called those "which had come to Mary," because they had remained with her after Martha had gone to meet our Lord, and had followed her when she herself went.

(46) **But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees**—*i.e.*, necessarily, some of those who had been with Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, and had believed. But why did they then go and tell the Pharisees? It is contrary to their position as believers to think that they did this as informers against Jesus. What they have seen has carried conviction to their own minds, and they report it to the Pharisees, either as a proof that He really was the Messiah, or in any case to demand from them a judgment on the facts which they report.

[(3) LIFE, TRUTH, LIGHT, AND LOVE MORE FULLY MANIFESTED. CORRESPONDING INCREASE OF THE UNBELIEF OF THE JEWS (*continued*).

(*b*) *The council of the Jews. The decree of death against the Giver of Life* (verses 47—53).
(*c*) *The withdrawal to Ephraim. Many seek for Jesus* (verses 54—57).
(*d*) *The supper at Bethany. Mary, Judas, the chief priests* (*love, selfishness, hatred*) (chap. xii. 1—11).
(*e*) *The entry into Jerusalem. The King and His people* (verses 12—19).
(*f*) *The wider kingdom* (verses 20—36).
    Certain Greeks would see Jesus. The firstfruits of the West (verses 20—22).
    The seed and the harvest. Life in death (verses 23—26).

their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

(47) Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. (48) If we let him thus alone, all *men* will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. (49) And one of them, *named* Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, (50) nor consider that it is expedient for us,[a] that one man

[a] ch. 18. 14.

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(*f*) *The wider kingdom* (continued).

The world-wide attraction of the Cross. Light in darkness (verses 27—36).

(*g*) *The final issue of the unbelief of the Jews.*

- (*α*) The writer's own judgment (verses 37—43)—
  - On no-faith (verses 37—41);
  - On half-faith (verses 42, 43).
- (*β*) The Judgment of Jesus (verses 44—50).
  - The rejection of light (verse 46); love ("that I might save the world," verse 47); truth (verse 49); life (verse 50).]

(47) **Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council.**—Matters have reached too serious a stage for them to allow further delay. Opponents have become believers; enemies have become friends; and there are men of their own rank, and men with whom they had taken counsel against Him, who have now believed. The Pharisees go in their difficulty to the chief priests, who were for the most part Sadducees, and they together summon a meeting of the Sanhedrin.

**What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.**—The note of interrogation may be placed in the middle or at the end of the clause. The latter suits better the energy of their language. "What do we, seeing that this Man doeth many miracles?" They accept the testimony of the Jews who have come to them, and cannot longer throw doubt upon His miracles. The question is asked in the present tense; it is not a matter for future action. "What are we doing, seeing what this Man is doing?" They feel that they have been inactive but too long, while He has been daily gaining influence. The form of their question is a strange contradiction; they cannot but admit that He doeth many signs, and yet their pride will call Him by no name but the contemptuous "this Man!"

(48) **If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him.**—He who but a short time since had escaped from their stones and violence, and had retired to Bethany, was now within two miles of Jerusalem. One work had carried conviction to the minds of all who had seen it, though many of them were of their own party. Another such miracle in the city itself would carry conviction, they think, to the minds of all.

**And the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.**—The dread of the Roman power must have been constantly present to the Jews of that generation. They had seen Archelaus deposed, and a Roman procurator had come to carry into effect the enrolment decreed by Augustus (Luke ii. 1). Pontius Pilate had suppressed outbreaks by violence in the Temple itself. There had been tumults in connection with the Corban money and with Barabbas. The Temple mountain was the site of the Roman fortress Antonia, and this dread power may at any moment destroy the national life, which only existed on sufferance.

The attempts to prove that "our place" can mean "the Temple" must now be given up; and if we attach a local meaning to the word we must understand it of Jerusalem. It may, however, be questioned whether the word has any local signification here. Like our words "standing," and "place," and "position," it certainly may have a moral sense, and New Testament examples of this usage are frequent. (See Acts i. 25; xxv. 16; Rom. xv. 23; 1 Cor. xiv. 16; Heb. xii. 17.) It is suggested that this sense is more in harmony with the feeling of the Pharisees. They possessed no local power; and the city could not be taken away from them more entirely than it already was. Their existence as rulers depended upon the Mosaic law and upon the services of the Temple. Round these centres they had gathered human tradition and ordinance, to which they clung because they only could interpret them, and they only could use the vast powers which were thus exercised over men. The Law had become practically an intricate system of tradition, and the Temple-service had become practically an intricate system of ritual. With this the Roman empire, following its usual policy, had not interfered, and the Jewish hierarchy had become the centre and the rulers of the national life. But in direct opposition to both of them had been the work and teaching of Christ. He had sought to establish for law and service the simplicity of their first spiritual principles. His spiritual teaching was a cutting to the very root of their whole being. If all the people believed on Him their *raison d'être* would be gone, and the Romans would no longer suffer an *imperium in imperio*, which they now allowed because it swayed the masses of the people. They would take both their position, and with it the rank which they still claimed as a nation.

The emphatic position of the word "our" should be noted, and also that "place and nation" are linked together as one complex thought attached to it.

(49) **And one of them, named Caiaphas.**—Comp. Notes on Matt. xxvi. 3; Luke iii. 2. His proper name was Joseph, and the name Caiaphas is the Syriac form of Cephas. He, like Peter, took the name of "Rockman," as a title to indicate his work! For the succession of high priests at this time, see Jos. *Ant.* xviii. 2, § 2. Caiaphas himself was priest from A.D. 26—36.

**Being the high priest that same year.**—The words occur again in verse 51 and in chap. xviii. 13. They are used with a solemnity of meaning to express "that fatal and decisive year."

**Ye know nothing at all.**—There had probably been various suggestions made by different members of the Sanhedrin which seemed to him to miss the mark, or to fall short of the one means which would have a successful issue.

(50) **Nor consider that it is expedient for us . .**—This remarkable counsel has linked itself in St. John's thoughts with the name of Caiaphas. He quotes it again in chap. xviii. 51.

should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. (51) And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; (52) and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. (53) Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. (54) Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.

(55) And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the

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**Should die for the people, and that the whole nation . . .**—Different words are used here in the Greek, as in the English. The former word represents the theocratic people, those who were united together as the servants of God; the latter word is that which is used in verse 48, and represents the political nation as one of the nations of the earth.

(51) **And this spake he not of himself.**—There is a moral beauty in the words, in spite of the diabolical intent with which they are uttered; and St. John adds the explanation that they had an origin higher than him who spake them. Writing after the events, he has seen them fulfilled, and regards them as an unconscious prophecy. Like another Balaam, Caiaphas was the oracle of God in spite of himself, and there is in his words a meaning far beyond any that he had intended.

**Being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation.**—He stood, therefore, in a relation which made him the official representative of God to the people, and gave him an official capacity to convey God's truth. This was represented in the days of Samuel by the Urim and Thummim; and John, himself a Jew, still thinks of the high priest's breast as bearing the oracle which declared the will of God, whatever unworthy human thoughts may have filled the heart beneath. It may be that another reference to the high priest's office is present in these thrice-written words. It was the high priest's duty to "enter within the veil," and "make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year" (Lev. xvi.). In that year the veil was rent, and the first step taken by which the holy place was destroyed, and the high priest's office ceased to exist. With the destruction of the holy place the Jewish day of Atonement lost its significance, but the high priest that year, by his counsel and action in the Sanhedrin, was causing the sacrifice which should be presented by another high priest, in the Holy of Holies as an Atonement for the world—"Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption" (Heb. ix. 11, 12).

(52) **And not for that nation only.**—Caiaphas had said "die for the people," using the word which meant the people of the Jews. St. John said, "die for that nation," using the wider word which meant the nation as one of the nations of the earth. He now passes to a wider meaning still. He has lived to see a partial fulfilment of the ingathering of the "other sheep" of chap. x. 16, and he thinks of that death as for God's children in all nations, who shall be one flock under one shepherd.

(53) **Then from that day forth they took counsel . . .**—On that day, then, the Sanhedrin officially decreed His death. The remaining question was how they could carry out this decree without exciting a popular tumult, or bringing themselves into collision with the Romans. (Comp. Note on Matt. xxvi. 4.)

(54) **Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews.**—He had heard of the decree of the Sanhedrin which had been publicly made known (verse 57), and therefore avoided persons who would have carried it into effect.

"The Jews" are, as before, the hostile party. The passage is a good illustration of St. John's use of the term, for He was of course among Jews, in the ordinary meaning of the word, during the sojourn at Ephraim. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 19.)

**But went thence unto a country near to the wilderness.**—All the better MSS. read "unto the country . . ." as in contrast to the city, Jerusalem, where "the Jews" dwelt. He went from Bethany, when He had heard of what had taken place at Jerusalem, "into the country." This is further defined as "near to the wilderness," and then the name of the city is given.

**Into a city called Ephraim.**—The position of this "city" is not known. The MSS. spell it variously as *Ephraim*, *Ephrem*, *Ephram*, and *Ephratha*. Eusebius and Jerome both assumed it to be the same place as Ephron, but differed as to its position, the former fixing it at eight, and the latter at twenty miles, north-east from Jerusalem. Both would place it, therefore, in Judæa; and this agrees with its position "near to the wilderness," for the desert of Judæa extended nearly as far as Jericho. In 2 Chron. xiii. 19, we have an Ephrain or Ephron (according to the written text and the LXX.) in connection with the neighbourhood of Bethel. This is mentioned by Josephus (*Wars*, iv. 9, § 9), and is near to the wilderness of Bethaven. It is possibly the place named here; but a Jew would naturally use the phrase, "the wilderness," to mean the desert of Judæa. Dr. Robinson would identify Ephraim and Ephron with Ophrah (Josh. xviii. 23; 1 Sam. xvii. 23), and fix the locality at the modern *el-Taiyibeh*, four or five miles east from Bethel, and sixteen from Jerusalem, which would agree roughly with the position assigned by Jerome. We must be content to leave the matter in this uncertainty. (Comp. Note on Luke xvii. 11.)

(55) **And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand.**—Comp. Notes on chaps. ii. 13, and vi. 4.

**Out of the country.**—Not the country near Ephraim, but the country generally, as opposed to the city.

**To purify themselves.**—The Law ordained no special purifications before the Passover, but on the general principle of ceremonial cleanness, a large number of pilgrims would necessarily go up before the feast to observe the legal rites and offer the required sacrifices. The time required varied from one to six days. (Comp. Gen. xxxv. 2; Ex. xix. 10, 11; Num. ix. 10; 2 Chron. xxx. 17, 18; and Notes on chap. xviii. 28, and Acts xxi. 24, 26; xxiv. 18.)

country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves. (56) Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast? (57) Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew *it*, that they might take him.

A.D. 33.

CHAPTER XII.—(1) Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. (2) There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. (3) Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. (4) Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, which should betray him, (5) Why was not this ointment sold for

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(56) **Then sought they for Jesus, and spake . . .**—The words imply a continuance of seeking and speaking. They describe the scene as it took place day after day as they stood in the Temple courts. They had heard rumours of recent events in the various parts from which they had come. Many of them had seen and heard Him at earlier feasts at Jerusalem, and they wonder whether He will come to the Passover, or whether the decree of the Jews will deter Him.

**What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?**—The words contain two questions: *What think ye? That He will not come to the feast?* He has not been seen in any of the caravans, and the place of His retirement is not known to them. They ask the question one of another; but the tone of doubt is prevalent.

(57) **Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees.**—If the word rendered "both" is regarded as part of the text, it would connect this verse with the fact that the people sought for Jesus—"They on the one hand sought and asked questions about Him; but besides this, the chief priests and the Pharisees had given commandment . . ." But the great majority of the best MSS. omit the word, and we must therefore read, *Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given commandment* . . . The words are an explanation of their question—"Will He come in the face of this commandment?" Their resolve to take Him has been arrived at as the result of their counsel (verse 53).

### XII.

(1) **Then Jesus six days before the Passover came to Bethany.**—The whole question of the arrangement of days during this last great week depends upon the conclusion which we adopt with regard to the day on which our Lord was crucified. The discussion of this is reserved for a separate Note, where it may be fully dealt with. (Comp. *Excursus F: The Day of the Crucifixion of our Lord.*)

(2) **There they made him a supper.**—Comp. Notes on Matt. xxvi. 6 *et seq.*, and Mark xiv. 3 *et seq.*, which are clearly accounts of the same supper. Here the details peculiar to St. John, who was an eye-witness, will be noted. St. Matthew gives no indication of the day. St. Mark seems to place it two days before the Passover; but comp. Notes on Mark xvi. 1, 2. Both the other accounts tell us that the supper was in the house of Simon the leper. St. John does not define the place more definitely than to say that it was in Bethany; but he alone adds the facts that Martha was still serving, and that Lazarus was present as a guest.

**And Martha served.**—The tense of this verb differs from that of the others in the verse, and implies the continued act of serving, whilst "made a feast" is the statement of the fact as a whole. (Comp. Luke x. 40.)

**Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.**—This is a natural touch answering to the impression that the fact made. It is closely connected with the statement of the preceding verse, "Lazarus had been dead, whom he raised from the dead." Here was one sitting at meat with them who had lain in the sepulchre four days. The meal is in his case, as afterwards in that of our Lord Himself (Luke xxiv. 41—43), a physical proof of the Resurrection; and his presence by the side of our Lord calls forth from Mary the anointing, which testifies to her gratitude and love.

(3) **Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard.**—Here, again, St. John alone gives the name of her whom St. Matthew and St. Mark call "a woman," and here, too, she is true to the earlier character as we have it drawn in St. Luke (x. 40, 42). From this passage also we know that it was a "pound" of ointment which she took. The other accounts tell us that it was an "alabaster box." This pound was the Greek *litra*, the Latin "libra," the pound of twelve ounces.

For the "ointment of spikenard," see Mark xiv. 3. It may perhaps mean "Nard Pistik," or Pistik ointment, the word Pistik being a local name. The fact that this peculiar word occurs only in these two passages points to this as the probable explanation.

**And anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair.**—St. Matthew and St. Mark both state that she anointed His head. This was the usual custom (comp. Note on Luke vii. 46, and Ps. xxiii. 5); but St. John remembers that the act of love went beyond that of common esteem, in the depth of its gratitude and reverence, and anointed the feet, and wiped them with her own hair.

**And the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.**—The ointment was imported from the East in sealed flasks, which were broken when it was used. The strong perfume then escaped, and spread through the house (Mark xiv. 3).

(4) **Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot.**—Comp. Notes on chap. vi. 70, 71. St. Matthew tells us that the question was asked by "the disciples;" St. Mark, that it was asked by "certain persons;" St. John remembers that it was Judas who spoke, and he remembers that his words were characteristic of the man (verse 6). He implies by the form in which he relates these words, that he spoke for himself, and that the others did not join in his feeling.

(5) **Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence?**—Both the earlier Gospels

three hundred pence, and given to the poor? (6) This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag,[a] and bare what was put therein. (7) Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this. (8) For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

(9) Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

(10) But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; (11) because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

(12) On the next day much people that were come to the feast,[b] when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, (13) took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried,

[a] ch. 13. 29.

[b] Matt. 21. 8.

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preface this estimate by a reference to the use which was made of the ointment as actual waste. St. Matthew says only "that it might have been sold for much." St. Mark, "that it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence," that is, in actual value, for the yearly wage of a working man, and for the food therefore which would have maintained a poor man's household for a whole year. (Comp. Note on chap. vi. 7.) St. Mark adds, "and they were angry at her." (Comp. Note on chap. xi. 33.)

(6) This verse which follows from the reference to Judas is of course, like it, peculiar to St. John.

**But because he was a thief, and had the bag.**—Comp. Notes on chap. xiii. 29 and Luke viii. 1—3. We have to think of Judas as treasurer of the common fund which supplied the wants of the little band, and from which gifts to the poor were made. The word rendered "bag" here, the only passage where it occurs in the New Testament, and "chest," in 2 Chron. xxiv. 8—11, means literally the "key-chest," in which musicians carried their flute-keys. Hence it was applied to a chest in the wider sense, and especially, as here, to a small and portable chest.

**And bare what was put therein.**—This is but to say over again, if we take the ordinary sense of the words, what is already implied in the fact that he kept the bag. The form of the word expresses continuance of the act, and may refer to the recurring opportunities of fraud as distinct from the mere fact of carrying the chest with a known sum in it. But we may certainly render the word "bare away," for St. John himself uses it in this sense in chap. xx. 15; and this clause would then mean "and purloined what was put therein."

(7) **Against the day of my burying hath she kept this.**—The majority of the better MSS. read, "that she keep this against the day of My burying." Comp. Matt. xxvi. 12 and Mark xiv. 8. The thought here differs from that in the earlier Gospels, and the common reading has therefore been adapted to harmonise with it. Taking the better text, the meaning here is, "Let her alone, that she may keep this for the day of My embalmment." She had taken a pound of ointment (verse 3) and had anointed His feet. This reminds Him of the embalmment of the dead, which had been but lately in that very place, and in the person of one sitting with them, present to their minds. Her act is significant of the future which is approaching. Let them not stay that deed of love. Before the week ends His body will be carried to the sepulchre. The preparations for the grave have already been begun.

(8) This verse occurs word for word in both of the first two Gospels. (See Notes there.)

(9) **Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there.**—Some of the pilgrims who had come from Jericho would have told this in Jerusalem, where those who had previously come up from the country were earnestly asking about Him (chap. xi. 55). They go forth, then, in large numbers to Bethany to see Him; and this reminds the writer that many of them went not for this purpose only, but also that they might see Lazarus.

(10) **But the chief priests consulted.**—The chief priests were for the most part Sadducees (Acts v. 17). They have been acting with the Pharisees from chap. xi. 47 onwards. Their animus is shown in that, while no charge is brought against Lazarus, his life is a witness to the divinity of Him whom they have condemned to death, and a denial of their own doctrine that there is no resurrection (Acts xxiii. 8). The words do not mean that they came to a final decision to put him to death, but that they took counsel on the matter, and watched their opportunity.

(11) **Many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.**—Better, *were going away, and believing on Jesus.* The tenses mark the continuance of the secession, and the two words mark the two acts by which on the one hand they were going away from the authority of the priests and, on the other hand, were believing on Jesus. (Comp. verse 18.)

(12) In the section which follows (verses 12—19), we again meet with matter which is common to St. John and the earlier Gospels. The Entry into Jerusalem is described by each of the evangelists, and the outer incidents are told more briefly by St. John than by any one of the others. (Comp. Notes on Matt. xxi. 1—11; Mark xi. 1—11; Luke xix. 29—44.)

**On the next day.**—See Note on verse 1. St. John only gives us this definite note of time, connecting the Entry with the previous sojourn at Bethany. The Synoptic narrative is more general, describing the approach from Jericho, and naming Bethphage (Matt. and Luke) and Bethany (Mark and Luke) as stages in the journey, but not connecting the Supper at Bethany with the Entry.

**When they heard that Jesus was coming.**—They heard probably from those of the Jews (verse 9) who had gone to Bethany. Note that these multitudes are not called Jews, though, of course, in the ordinary sense they were so. They were not "Jews" in the sense in which St. John uses the word, and he describes them as "much people that were come to the feast." (Comp. chap. xi. 54.)

(13) **Took branches of palm trees.**—Better, *took branches of the palm trees.* Literally, the Greek means "the palm branches of the palm trees." They were branches of the palms growing on the spot, or possibly such as were in general use at festivities. For the word rendered "branches," comp. 1 Macc. xiii. 51 ("branches

Hosanna: Blessed *is* the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. (14) And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, (15) Fear not,[a] daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt. (16) These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and *that* they had done these things unto him. (17) The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record. (18) For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle. (19) The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

(20) And there were certain Greeks

[a] Zech. 9. 9.

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of palm trees"), and for that rendered "palm trees," comp. Rev. vii. 9. Neither word occurs elsewhere in the New Testament. Again, the fuller Synoptic narrative includes but does not state this particular.

**Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.**—The better reading is, *Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord, and the King of Israel.* These words of their cry are peculiar to St. John. The fullest report is St. Matthew's (see Note on verse 9). That all the accounts differ is natural, and they have all preserved to us some distinctive acclamation with which the crowds welcomed Him whom they received as the Messiah. The cxviii. Psalm, from which these acclamations are taken (see verses 25 and 26), was currently interpreted as Messianic, and formed part of the Hallel chanted at Tabernacles and Passover. (Comp. Note on chap. vii. 37.)

It is important to observe that St. John, like St. Matthew, does not follow the Greek of the LXX. in translating the Hebrew word "Hosanna," but preserves the Hebrew sound in Greek letters. Comp. Rev. xix. 6, where the word "Alleluia" is transliterated in the same way.

(14) **And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon.**—St. John simply mentions this to introduce the prophecy. The others all give the incidents in detail. "Having found," does not imply that the colt was found without the search which the other Evangelists record. (Comp. the same word in chap. ix. 35.) It has been noted, as illustrating the fact, that the word "found" includes the sending the disciples to look for the colt, that it is the same Greek word which Archimedes used when he found the object of his search, and cried, *Eureka! Eureka!*

(15) **Fear not, daughter of Sion.**—The quotation is made freely, and in an abbreviated form. (Comp. the fuller form in Matt. xxi. 5, and Note upon it there.) It is in the two Hebrew Gospels only that the connection of the fact with the prophecy is mentioned.

**Sitting on an ass's colt.**—The Greek (LXX.) has "a young ass." St. John's translation is nearer to the Hebrew. (Comp. *Introduction*, p. 374).

(16) **These things understood not his disciples at the first . . .**—Comp. Notes on chap. ii. 22 and xx. 9. It is a touch peculiar to St. John, and exactly in his manner. He remembers the difference between the spiritual receptivity, before and after Pentecost, in the Apostolic band itself. He remembers how the Old Testament Scriptures became filled with a new life and meaning, as the Spirit brought to the memory their words, and the words of Him of whom they told.

**When Jesus was glorified.**—Comp. Note on chap. vii. 39.

**They had done these things unto Him.**—The narrative implies, these, the incidents which the others state. The phrase "these things" occurs three times, referring emphatically to the correspondence between the prophecy and the actual incidents.

(17) **When he called Lazarus . . . . bare record.**—Several MSS. and some of the oldest versions read, "bare record that He called Lazarus out of the grave, and raised him from the dead." The difference in the texts is only that of one letter (ὅτε and ὅτι). If we take the reading which was adopted by our translators, and which is best supported, we must distinguish between the multitude mentioned in this verse, and that mentioned in verse 18. The meaning of this text is that the Jews of verses 9 and 11, and those of chap. xi. 45, with the people of Bethany, bear witness of the event, the recurrence of which they had themselves seen; and that this testimony was received by the multitude of pilgrims who went forth therefore to receive Jesus as the Messiah. (Comp. especially Luke xix. 37.) This interpretation makes the Jews of Jerusalem themselves the witnesses whose testimony leads the multitude to receive our Lord as the Christ.

If we take the alternative, but less probable text, the multitude in both verses will be one and the same.

(18) **For this cause the people**—*i.e.* (see last verse), the multitude of verse 12.

**For that they heard . . . this miracle.**—The emphatic form of the sentence points out that the raising of Lazarus was the miracle which carried the entire conviction of the multitude. They had heard of and in some cases seen the miracles, but this stood by itself, as witness which could not be gainsaid.

(19) **Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing?**—The words may be also read, "Look how ye profit nothing" (imperative); or, *Ye perceive how ye profit nothing* (indicative). Upon the whole this last is to be preferred. They blame each other for the failure of all their plans (comp. chap. xi. 47), and prepare themselves to accept the counsel of Caiaphas.

**Behold, the world is gone after him.**—They use terms which express the bitterness of their despair. They who had asked in scorn, "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?" who called "cursed" "this people who knoweth not the law" who followed Him (chap. vii. 48, 49), have heard Jews of Jerusalem express their belief in Him; and now, see Him whom they are seeking to kill, borne as the Messiah at the head of a throng of pilgrims.

The words rendered "gone after him" apply that they had gone away from themselves, and rejected their authority; and had then gone after Him. (Comp. Note on verse 11.)

(20) **And there were certain Greeks.**—Comp. Note on chap. vii. 35, where we have the same word in the original, and Acts vi. 1; ix. 29; and xi. 20. They were not *Hellenists, i.e.*, Greek Jews, but *Hellenes, i.e.*, Gentiles.

among them that came up to worship at the feast: (21) the same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. (22) Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

(23) And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. (24) Verily, verily,

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**Among them that came up to worship at the feast.**—The words imply that they were in the habit of going up to Jerusalem at the feasts, *i.e.*, that though Greeks by birth, they had been admitted to the privileges of Judaism. They belonged to the class known as "Proselytes of the Gate." (Comp. Notes on Matt. xxiii. 15 and Acts viii. 27.)

(21) **The same came therefore to Philip.**—We have no indication of the time when, or of the place where, these words were spoken. St. John alone gives us this incident, and he gives us this incident only, of all that occurred, as we know from the earlier Gospels, between the entry into Jerusalem and the Last Supper; and he relates this coming of the Greeks not for the sake of the fact itself, but for that of the discourse which followed upon it. He is careful, therefore, only to mention it, and is not concerned, for the purpose he has in view, with any of the historic details. The last words of the discourse (verse 36) do, however, intimate that they were followed by a retirement from public teaching, and from public appearance in Jerusalem. They would, then, be among the last words spoken in the Temple before the retirement to Bethany, on the evening of what we call Wednesday. (Comp. Luke xxi. 37.) They were uttered, probably, in the Court of the Gentiles, as He passed from the Court of the Women, which, as the most public place for Jewish assemblies, was the frequent scene of His teaching. On the previous day, the Court of the Gentiles had been cleansed from the traffic and merchandise which had been customary in it, and the temple had been declared to be "a house of prayer *for all nations*." The court of the Gentiles was divided from the inner square of the Temple by a stone fence, bearing upon pillars, placed at regular distances, the following words in Greek and Latin:—"No alien must pass within the fence round the Temple and the court. If any one be caught doing so, he must blame himself for the death that will follow." This prohibition was known before, from Josephus (*Ant.* xv. 11, 5); but in our own day one of the very slabs, bearing the exact words, has been discovered by M. Ganneau during the excavations of the Palestine Exploration Fund. (Comp. Note on Acts xxii. 28, 29, and especially the Note on Mark xi. 17.) The events and the words of these days must have brought strange thoughts to the minds of proselytes, men who were worshippers of the one God by personal conviction, and not because of the faith of their ancestors; and with hearts filled with wonder as to what these things meant—half-grasping, it may be, the truth that this middle wall of partition should be broken down—they ask for a special interview with Jesus. (Comp. Eph. ii. 12 *et seq.*)

**Which was of Bethsaida of Galilee.**—The mention of this place again here seems to intend that it should be told as explaining why these Greeks came to Philip. They may have themselves come from the neighbourhood of Bethsaida, or from one of the Greek cities of Decapolis.

(22) **Philip cometh and telleth Andrew.**—It is a striking coincidence, and perhaps more than this, that the Greeks thus came into connection with the only Apostles who bear Greek names; and may themselves have had some special connection by birth, or residence, or culture with Greek civilisation. The names have occurred together before (chaps. i. 44; vi. 7, 8): they were fellow-townsmen and friends. But Andrew was also brother of Simon Peter, and is one of the first group of four in the apostolic band. (Comp. Mark xiii. 3.) The Greeks then naturally come to Philip, and Philip consults his friend Andrew, who is in a position of greater intimacy with the Lord than he himself is, and they come together and tell Jesus.

(23) **And Jesus answered them, saying.**—The words are rather the utterance of the thoughts of His own mind, which this visit of the Greeks suggests, than an answer. They are spoken to the Apostles, but the narrative is too compressed for us to know whether any answer was given to the Greeks apart from this. The explanation which is most probable is that the Greeks heard this discourse, and that it is in reality an answer to the thoughts of their hearts, and to the words they wished to have spoken to Him.

**The hour is come.**—This approach of men from outside the limits of Judaism who have been admitted within its pale, and who now, when priests and rulers are seeking to kill Him, are seeking to render Him homage, brings back again the thought of the scattered sheep, for whose gathering the Shepherd's life must be laid down (chap. x. 16—19). They are the first-fruits of the great flocks of humanity, and their presence is as the first stroke of the bell which sounds the fatal but glorious hour. That hour marked out in the counsels of God, and ever present in His own thoughts, has now come.

**That the Son of man should be glorified.**—This is to be accomplished in His ascension and return to the glory of Heaven. (Comp. Notes on chap. xvii. 1, 2, 5.) But the immediate connection implies that He regards the extension of his Messianic work, and the acceptance of His truth by the nations of the earth, as part of the glory of the Son of man. The connection implies also that He regards His own death as the dark path which must be trodden before the path of glory can be entered.

(24) **Verily, verily, I say unto you.**—He is passing to the deeper truth which underlies His words, and calls attention to what He is about to say by the usual and solemn "Verily, verily." (Comp. Note on chap. i. 51.)

**Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die.**—The truth is one of those of the spirit-world, lying beyond the ordinary language of men. He prepares them for it by what we call the analogy of a physical law, but what is really an instance of the working of the great law of life, which God has given to the moral and physical worlds alike. All knew that a grain of wheat, though containing in itself the germs of life, would remain alone, and not really live unless it fell to the earth. Then the life-germs would burst forth, and the single grain, in its own death, would give life to blade, and stalk, and ear of corn. Its death then was the true life, for it released the inner life-power which the husk before held captive; and this life-power multiplying itself in successive grains would clothe the whole field with a harvest of much fruit.

I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. (25) He that loveth his life shall lose it;[a] and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. (26) If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will *my* Father honour.

(27) Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me

[a] Matt. 10. 39.

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This law Christ now teaches to be a law also of the moral world, and one to which His own life is subject. Here too life issues from death. The moral power which is the life of the world finds its source in the death of the Son of man. "He is life." "In Him is life." "He quickens whom He will." "Whosoever believeth in Him hath eternal life." These truths this Gospel has told us again and again: but Christ now tells that while He is still on earth this life exists, but in its germs; and that in His death it will burst forth, and grow up, and multiply itself in the great spiritual harvest of the world. Such was the prophecy. The history of all that is best, and truest, and noblest in the life of eighteen centuries comes to us as the fulfilment. Hearts hardened, sinful, dead, that have been led to think of His death, and in thoughts of it have felt germs of life springing up and bursting the husks of their former prison, and growing up into living powers which have changed their whole being; this is the individual fulfilment that has come to many and may come to all.

(25) **He that loveth his life shall lose it.**—The reading here is uncertain, and may be, perhaps with slightly more probability is, *He that loveth his life loses it*—*i.e.*, that the loss of life is not in the future only, but that in the present, in every moment when a man loves and seeks to save his own life, he is then, and by that very seeking, actually losing it.

The words of this verse are familiar to us from the earlier Gospels, and have been explained in Notes on Matt. x. 39; xvi. 25; Mark viii. 35; Luke ix. 24; xvii. 33. The disciples had heard them laid down as the law of their own life and work. They now hear the mysterious words again, and they are asserted as the law to which even His life is submitted. There is even in His human nature a physical and emotional life which would shrink from sacrifice and death (verse 27; comp. Note on Matt. xxvi. 39), but in self-sacrifice and death is His own glory and the life of the world. There is in all human nature a principle which would seek as the highest good the life of the body and of the soul, as distinct from the higher life of the spirit, and would shrink from sacrifice and death; but the true principle of life is of the spirit, and only in the sacrifice of the desires of the lower physical and emotional life is that spiritual life realised.

(26) **If any man serve me, let him follow me.**—The close connection of verses 23—25 make it certain that the spiritual law of sacrifice is there applied to the life of our Lord Himself. This verse makes it equally certain that the law is applied to those who follow Him. The point of the whole teaching is missed unless we think of the Greeks as present. They had come as volunteer disciples. Did they know what the discipleship was? Were they prepared to follow Him in self-sacrifice, that through sacrifice they may obtain eternal life? It had been the condition of earlier discipleship. It is laid down for the new disciples, but in the presence of the older ones who in the dark days that have now come were to learn what sacrifice meant. The Greeks needed no less than the Hebrews to learn it; the men of a wider civilisation and more philosophic thought no less than the fishermen of Galilee and the scribes of Jerusalem. All self-seeking, whether in the coarser forms of pleasure and power or in the more refined forms of emotion and thought, is self-loving; all self-sacrifice, whether in the daily round of duty to man or in the devotion of the whole self to God, is self-saving. Self-seeking is always akin to, and ofttimes one with, hatred of others; and hatred is death. Self-sacrifice is akin to, and one with, love to others; and love is life.

**And where I am, there shall also my servant be.**—This is an anticipation of the glory of the Son of man for which the hour had already come. (Comp. Note on chap. xvii. 24.)

**If any man serve me, him will my Father honour.**—The condition is the same as in the first clause of the verse, the difference of that which follows upon the condition again bringing out in the fulness of its meaning the law of life through sacrifice:

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| "If any man serve Me," | "let him follow Me" . . . | "he that hateth his life in this world" |
| | "him will my Father honour" . . . | "shall keep it unto life eternal." |

The honour of the servant after his work is done is in the same relation to that work as the glory of the Son of man is to His work. This honour will consist in his being where the Son of man is; and this will be the Father's gift (chap. xvii. 24).

(27) **Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say?**—The word rendered "soul" is the same word as that rendered "life" in verse 25. (Comp. especially Matt. xvi. 25, 26.) It is the seat of the natural feelings and emotions, and, as the fatal hour approaches, our Lord is in that region of His human life troubled. There is a real shrinking from the darkness of the death which is at hand. The conflict exists but for a moment, but in all its fearfulness is real, and then the cup of the world's woe is seized and drunk to its bitter dregs. Men have sometimes wondered that St. John passes over the agony of the garden of Gethsemane, but the agony of Gethsemane is here, and the very words of Matt. xxvi. 39 are echoed. Men have wondered, too, that in the life of the Son of man a struggle such as this could have had even a moment's place. Not a few, indeed, would at any cost read the words otherwise. But they *cannot* be read otherwise, either on the written page or in the hearts of men. That troubled soul asked, "What shall I say?" Blessed reality! In that struggle humanity struggled, and in that victory humanity won.

**Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.**—It is uncertain whether the first words of this sentence are a prayer, or whether they should be read as a question. In the latter case the meaning would be, "What shall I say? Shall I say, Father save Me from this hour? But no: for this cause came I unto this hour. I cannot shrink back or seek to be delivered from it." As a prayer from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. (28) Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying*, I have both glorified *it*, and will glorify *it* again. (29) The people therefore, that stood by, and heard *it*, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. (30) Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. (31) Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. (32) And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto

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the meaning would be—"Father, save Me from this hour; but for this cause, that I may be saved from it, came I unto this hour. The moment of agony is the moment of victory."

The real difficulty of the verse lies in the words "for this cause," for which a meaning must be sought in the context. No interpretation of them is free from objection, but that which seems to have, upon the whole most probability, understands them as referring to the words which follow, and reads the clause, "Father, glorify Thy name," as part of this verse. The sense of the whole passage would therefore be, "Father, save Me from this hour; but Thy will, not Mine, be done; for this cause came I unto this hour, that Thy name be glorified; Father, glorify Thy name." (Comp. Note on Luke xii. 49, 50.)

(28) **Father, glorify thy name.**—The pronoun "Thy" is emphatic. The Son's will is one with that of the Father; the Son's glory is in the glorifying the Father's name. Comp. the opening clause of the Lord's Prayer (Note on Matt. vi. 9 *et seq.*) and in this context Note on verse 23.

**Then came there a voice from heaven.**—The words mean, not that a sound came from heaven, but that there was heard an articulate voice (comp. Note on chap. iii. 8); and that St. John intended his readers to understand this cannot be questioned. He records here a fact parallel to those recorded by the other Evangelists at the Baptism (Matt. iii. 17; Mark i. 11; Luke iv. 22), and at the Transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 5; Mark ix. 7; Luke ix. 35), and parallel to that to which St. Luke and St. Paul have testified (Acts ix. 4; xxii. 9; xxvi. 14).

**I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.**—The words are without limit, extending to the whole past and to the whole future of God's revelation of Himself to man. The only limit in the context is that this revelation is thought of as in the person of Christ. His words, His works, His life revealing the mercy and love and majesty of the Father, had to many hearts glorified the Father's name. The wider future is at hand. The death and resurrection are to reveal God's character, and therefore glorify the Father's name to all the world. (Comp. Ex. xxxiii. 18, 19; xxxiv. 5—7.)

(29) **The people . . . . said that it thundered.**—Better, *the multitude*. Nothing could be stronger testimony to the fact that this narrative was written by one who was present at the events of which he tells, than the way in which these thoughts of the people at the time are preserved to us. Their insertion by a later hand is all but impossible; and they are, moreover, opposed to what must be assumed as the object of a later writer. In a treatise to prove the divinity of Christ there could be no place for them. In a Gospel which assumes the truth that He is divine, and does not seek to prove it, but to bear witness to the life which carries its own proof (comp. Notes on chaps. i. 7; xx. 30, 31), they are evidence that the witness is true. The fact that St. John clearly means us to understand (verse 28) that a distinct voice spake from heaven does not forbid our understanding also that this voice was heard more or less distinctly, or was as a voice not heard at all, in proportion as the hearts of the hearers were or were not receptive of the voice of God. To some it seemed but as natural thunder, but their own Scripture had taught again and again "God thundereth marvellously with His voice: great things doeth He which we cannot comprehend," and the religious interpretation of nature hears everywhere the voice of God. Others, and these must have been Pharisees (comp. Acts xxiii. 8, 9), recognise a voice which is more than that of nature or of man, and think that an angel hath spoken. (Comp. Note on chap. v. 4.)

(30) **This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.**—More exactly, *not for My sake did this voice come, but for your sakes.* These words are an answer to the thoughts, spoken and unspoken, of the multitude. Jesus Himself knew that the Father heareth Him always, but this answer is a sign to others. (Comp. chap. xi. 41, 42.) He calls it a *voice* in answer to those who said it thundered, or that an angel had spoken. There was that, then, which seemed to them but the thunder's sound or an angel's word, which, coming in answer to His prayer and after His teaching, should have been, to ears ready to hear and minds willing to receive, the voice of God witnessing to the mission of His Son.

(31) **Now is the judgment of this world.**—For the word "judgment" comp. Notes on chaps. iii. 17—19 and xvi. 11. There is here, following on the coming of the Greeks, which He reads as a sign, and upon the voice from heaven, which was a sign for the multitude, the thought of the Messianic kingdom, of which the first members were then present, and which was to comprehend all men. This thought includes—(1) the judgment (condemnatory) of this world; (2) the casting out of the prince of this world; (3) the establishment of His spiritual kingdom (verse 32).

**Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.**—The title "prince of this world" was the regular Rabbinic title for Satan, whom they regarded as the ruler of the Gentiles, the Jews not being included in his kingdom. The reign of the true Messiah is over the Gentile and Jewish world alike; Gentiles as well as Jews are at this moment in the temple listening to Him; Jews as well as Gentiles have been subjects of the prince of this world (chap. viii. 44; Rom. ii.). The world itself, as opposed to Christ, is condemned, for its unbelief crucifies Jesus Christ; but the Resurrection and Ascension are Heaven's witness that He is the Son of God. The world's condemnation is followed by the casting out of its ruler.

The whole future is present to the mind of Christ, and in the confidence of victory He uses the emphatic "now" of both the judgment of the world and the dethronement of its prince. It should be noted, however, that the tenses differ. The one is thought of as the immediate result of His death; the other is the gradual victory of truth, and is spoken of in the same future as the drawing all men of the following verse.

me. (33) This he said, signifying what death he should die. (34) The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever:[a] and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man? (35) Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you.

[a] Ps. 110. 4.

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(32) **And I, if I be lifted up from the earth.**—The pronoun is strongly emphatic. "And *I*," in opposition to the prince of this world; the conqueror in opposition to the vanquished foe. The conditional form, "If I be lifted up," answers to the "troubled soul" of verse 27. He knows that it will be so, but He leaves the future to declare its own truths. Comp. the phrases, "If it be possible," "If this may not pass away from Me" (Matt. xxvi. 39, 42), and Note on chap. xiv. 3. The words "lifted up" have occurred before in chaps. iii. 14 and viii. 28; but the context here shows that they include the thought of the ascension into heaven. It is from the heavenly throne that the Messiah will rule over His spiritual kingdom.

**Will draw all men unto me.**—Better, . . . . *unto Myself.* The words "all men" are not to be limited by interpretations which refer them to nations, or to elect persons within nations; but are to be taken in all the fulness of their width as meaning simply what they say—"*all.*" The drawing unto Himself is the assertion of His reign over the world, from which the prince of evil shall be cast out. He will Himself be the centre of the new kingdom, from which none shall be shut out. These Greeks who are drawn to Him now are the first-fruits of the harvest of which the whole world is the field, and of which the last day is to be the great ingathering. The word "draw" occurs once in the New Testament, besides this passage, in a moral sense (chap. vi. 44; comp. Note on it there). It is accomplished in the work of the Holy Spirit, whose mission to the Church was dependent on the ascension of our Lord (chaps. vii. 39 and xvi. 7); and the promise is fulfilled even in the case of those who resist the Holy Spirit's influence. They are drawn by the moral power of the life and death and resurrection of Christ brought home to them by the Holy Ghost; but no moral power can compel a will which is free. (Comp. Note on chap. vi. 37.) The whole mission-work of the Church and every effort which Christianity brings to bear upon the evil of the world implies this moral drawing; and implies, too, the power of man to reject it. But we may not say this moral power is not leading men to Christ, where we can least trace it, and we may not say that there is any limit where its influence ends. (Comp. Note on 1 Pet. iii. 19.)

(33) **By what death he should die.**—Better, *by what manner of death* . . . (Comp. chap. xviii. 32.) The words are the Apostle's interpretation of the saying of our Lord. He remembers it as he has recorded it twice before (chaps. iii. 14 and viii. 28), but he adds here words ("from the earth") which supply another thought, though the two thoughts are not inconsistent. The words bear the double sense, and looking back upon the fact of the Crucifixion, he sees in that a lifting up which was part of the great moral victory over the world, and in the very cross of shame he sees the throne of glory.

(34) **We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever. . . .**—The term "law" refers to the whole of the Old Testament Scripture, as we have seen in chap. x. 34. (Comp. Note there.) They may have referred to such passages as Pss. lxxxix. 36 and cx. 4; Isa. ix. 6; Dan. vii. 13, 14. This remark is an instance of the knowledge of Rabbinic theology which interpreted such passages of a temporal Messianic reign. They had witnessed His triumphal entry into the royal city, and had joined in the acclamations which hailed Him as their King. They expected Him to free them from Roman bondage, and to rule over them in an earthly paradise to which there should be no end. The Christ they thought was to abide for ever.

**How sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up?**—His words have conveyed to them the idea of His death, and we find "lifted up" used not unfrequently in the Rabbinical writings in this sense; but they do not understand more than this. It contradicts all their visions of a Messianic reign. The Son of man to be lifted up! What meant, then, such words as these—"And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. vii. 14)? They cannot reconcile these things, and they ask Him to explain them.

He had not at this time used the exact words they quote, if St. John has given to us the conversation in full, but they occur in chap. iii. 14, and the title "Son of man" occurs in this context in verse 23. It was, moreover, present to their thoughts from the passage in Daniel, and must have been familiarly known as used by Christ of Himself. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 51.)

**Who is this Son of man?**—"Who is *this* Son of man?" they would say. "We know who is the Son of man who is to abide for ever, but this Son of man who is to die we know not." The words express that they are wavering in their attachment to Him. The question was asked probably on the Wednesday. It came midway between the "Hosanna" of the entry into Jerusalem and the "Crucify him!" of the trial.

The words are remarkable as throwing light upon the sudden changes of feeling which swayed the multitude from the pole of faith to that of rejection. They heard words from Christ or saw works done by Him which carried conviction to all minds; but then there came some technical interpretation of an Old Testament passage declaring what the Messiah was to be, and in the cooler moments, when no word was speaking to the ear and no work presented itself to the eye, this test seemed fatal to the claim, and disbelief took the place of belief, and hatred that of love. We have met this again and again in the case of the priests and Pharisees. They did not, we may well believe, during the last days, leave any means untried by which they might move the fickle minds of the masses. (Comp. Matt. xxvii. 20.)

(35) **Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you.**—It is better, as we have often seen, to read *Therefore* for "Then." The word connects what follows closely with what has gone before. It was because of their question that Jesus said this. And yet it is not said that "He answered them," because what He said was not a direct answer. They are asking questions in which we may trace the spirit, if not the very words, of the formal, literal objectors who had, with like technicalities, stifled the truth whenever it was springing up in their minds. Such

Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. (36) While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

(37) But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: (38) that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report?[a] and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? (39) Therefore they could not believe, because that

[a] Isa. 53. 1; Rom. 10. 16.

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questions cannot be really answered, because they are not really questions. And now the day has gone, and the night is at hand. The old thought comes back to Him (chaps. ix. 4; xi. 9). The last rays of light are shining. It is but a little while, and He warns them with all the solemnity of this thought.

**Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you.**—The better reading is, *Walk according as ye have the light*—*i.e.*, "Walk as men who are conscious that the light is among them, use your opportunities; do not ask questions to raise objections, but ask them in order that you may know the truth." The man who thus used the light would by no means walk in darkness, but would have the light of life (chap. viii. 12). For him that neglected to use the means and faculty he had, both would cease to exist. (Comp. Note on Rom. i. 21.)

The words "come upon," or "overtake," is used of some sudden seizure. There are two parallels in Biblical Greek, "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness that the day should *overtake* you as a thief" (1 Thess. v. 4), and "Be sure your sin will *find you out*" (Num. xxxii. 23).

**He that walketh in darkness.**—Comp. Notes in chaps. viii. 12; ix. 4; xi. 9; and 1 John ii. 11.

**Knoweth not whither he goeth.**—The last word means "goeth away," "departeth." The frequent use of the word by St. John to express departure to the other world suggests that meaning here. He was going away. They ask, "Who is this Son of man who is lifted up," "who goes away?" He warns them lest darkness seize them, and they go away into darkness. In the next four chapters the same word is used twelve times of Christ's departure. (Comp. *e.g.* xiii. 3, 33, 36.)

(36) **While ye have light, believe in the light.**—Better, as above, *According as ye have the light.* The words are repeated and placed in the most emphatic position in the sentence.

**That ye may be the children of light.**—Better, *that ye may become sons of light.* (Comp. for this phrase Notes on chap. xvii. 12; Luke x. 6, and xvi. 8; also Eph. v. 8.) The thought here is the one familiar in St. John, that the believer should become like unto Him in whom he believed. Those who believed in the light should receive light, and become themselves centres whence light should radiate to others and illumine their own paths.

**These things spake Jesus, and departed.**—(Comp. Note on Luke xxi. 37.) He retired probably to Bethany.

(37) **But though he had done so many miracles before them.**—The words "before them" mean "in their presence," "before their eyes." They refer to the multitude (verse 34). St. John's narrative implies, therefore, that the "signs" of the earlier Gospels were well known. He has himself recorded but six miracles, and all these, with the exception of the feeding the five thousand, belong to the Judæan ministry. (Comp. Note on chap. ii. 11.)

**Yet they believed not on him.**—This is the writer's comment on the general result of Christ's work at the close of His public teaching. This too is said of the multitude, the people as a whole. There were, of course, not a few who were then walking according as they had light, but it was not so with the many. Rejection and not acceptance was the result of Christ's personal work on earth; yet rejection accompanied, as on this day, by signs which pointed to a world-wide acceptance. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" (chap. i. 11, 12).

(38) **That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled.**—This is the first instance in this Gospel of a phrase familiar to us already from its frequent occurrence in St. Matthew. We shall find it again in chaps. xiii. 18; xv. 25; xvii. 12; xviii. 9, 32; xix. 24, 26. Its frequency is one of the characteristics of the two Gospels which are most allied to Hebrew modes of thought. St. Matthew and St. John both regard the events of our Lord's life as fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Testament Scriptures. These prophecies foretold what in the divine plan was destined to occur, and therefore the events are regarded as occurring, in order that the will of God, as expressed in the prophecy, may be fulfilled. (Comp. Note on Matt. i. 22.)

**Lord, who hath believed our report? . . .**—The quotation is from the Greek version of Isa. liii. 1. That prophecy was by all understood of the Messiah. The prophet's lamentation of the neglect of the prophetic message by the people is here placed by the Evangelist, in his interpretation of it, in the lips of the Messiah Himself, as He, in the fuller meaning, addresses the Father with the words, "Who hath believed our report?" (Comp. the words as quoted by St. Paul in Rom. x. 16.) Here the "our report" means the "truth which we have declared unto them." (So Jer. x. 22, Gal. iii. 2.)

**And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?**—Comp. Notes on Luke i. 51, and Acts xiii. 17. The phrase was used, as in Isa. li. 9, lii. 10, to express the power of the Lord, and here refers especially to the power of the Lord manifested in the whole life of Christ. The signs which were revelations of this power are, of course, prominent in the thought, and the question strongly expresses the negative of the previous verse.

(39) **Therefore they could not believe, because.**—The words refer to those which have gone before, not to those which follow, and then by an addition give the reason more fully. "It was on account of the divine will expressed in Isaiah's prophecy." "It was therefore, namely, because Isaiah said again."

The words, "they could not believe," must be taken in their plain meaning as expressing impossibility. The Apostle is looking back upon the national rejection of Christ, and seeks a reason for it. He remembers how our Lord Himself had explained His method of

Esaias said again, (40) He hath blinded their eyes,[a] and hardened their heart; that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. (41) These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

(42) Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: (43) for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.[b]

(44) Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me,

[a] Matt. 10. 14.

[b] ch. 5. 44.

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teaching by parables, and has based it upon this prophecy of Isaiah (Matt. xiii. 14). The principle was that which has been repeated in His last public words (verses 35 and 36); that power used is increased, and power neglected destroys itself. Here, then, in these prophetic words was the reason they could not believe. Wilful rejection had been followed by rejection which was no longer within the power of the will. With this statement of St. John's should be compared our Lord's words on the same subject in chaps. v. 40 and vi. 37, Notes, and St. Paul's arguments in Rom. ix.—xi.

(40) **He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart . . . .**—These words are quoted three times in the New Testament. Our Lord, as we have seen, quotes them as explaining His own teaching (Matt. xiii. 14); St. John quotes them here to explain the rejection of that teaching; St. Paul quotes them in Acts xxviii. 26, to explain the rejection of the Gospel by the Jews at Rome. Yet we are to remember that the prophet and those who quote him are all witnesses that within Israel there were eyes which were not blinded and hearts which were not hardened. Isaiah, and John, and Paul, were all Jews; and our Lord Himself was, in His human nature, of the seed of Abraham. Isaiah's prophecy is accompanied by the promise of a holy seed (verse 13); St. John quotes these words, and adds that "even of the rulers many believed" (verse 42); St. Paul quotes them when "some believed the things which were spoken and some believed not" (verse 24); our Lord quotes them, and immediately says, "But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear." There is, indeed, a judicial blinding and a judicial hardening—let no man therefore presume; but these come only to eyes that will not to see, and to hearts that will not to hear —let no man therefore despair. The quotation in this place does not follow exactly either the Hebrew or the Greek of the passage in Isaiah. In the Hebrew text, as in the Authorised version, the prophet is commanded to "make the heart of this people fat." . . . The Greek text says simply, "The heart of this people was hardened." . . . St. John represents the action which God commanded to be done as done by Himself, and speaks of it in the past tense.

**And I should heal them.**—The pronoun here refers to Christ. St. John in his interpretation of the prophecy has made God ("He") the author of the judicial blindness and hardness, and represents Christ as the physician. This clause is, however, not to be taken separately, but is governed by "that not" which precedes, The effect of their not turning was that Christ could not heal them.

On the whole verse comp. Note on Matt. xiii. 14, and Acts xxviii. 26.

(41) **These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory.**—The better text is, . . . *because he saw His glory.* (Comp. Note on the reading in chap. xii. 17.) The result of seeing His glory was that he spake of Him. This is St. John's interpretation of the prophecy. Isaiah himself tells us, "I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple" (chap. vi. 1). But no man hath seen God at any time. The Word is the express image of His Person. This glory was of the pre-incarnate Word, who was in the beginning with God, and was God.

(42) **Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him.**—This is strongly asserted in opposition to the spiritual blindness of the nation. There were, notwithstanding, many even in the Sanhedrin itself who believed on Him.

**But because of the Pharisees they did not confess.**—Comp. Note on chap. ix. 22. It seems from the present passage that the Pharisees were the most determined foes of Christ, and that even the rulers were kept in awe by their threat of excommunication. This submission to the Pharisees' yoke which kept them from Christ was itself blinding their eyes and hardening their hearts. They are at once, therefore, the exception to, and the illustration of, the principle of which St. John was speaking. They had the power to see the truth, but they had not the will to face boldly the results of their own convictions, and the unused power ceased to exist. (Comp. Rom. x. 10.)

(43) **For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.**—For "praise" read in both instances *glory.* "The glory which comes from men more than the glory which came from God." Comp. Note on chap. v. 44, where the truth is put in the form of a question by our Lord. Here it explains the fact that there were men who believed, and yet did not publicly confess their faith. There our Lord's question goes deeper, and asserts that the seeking of the glory which comes from men is inconsistent with the existence of any true belief in God.

(44) The last few verses (37—43) have given us the thoughts of St. John as he looked back on the unbelief of Judaism. He had given our Lord's closing word in verse 36, and there stated that He hid Himself from them. He now gives other words of our Lord condemning the unbelief of which he had been speaking, and of which the probable explanation is that they are a summary of words previously uttered by our Lord, but grouped together here as specially bearing upon the subject of which he is writing. For the remaining verses of this chapter, the Notes will therefore consist chiefly of reference to earlier passages where the same words have already occurred.

(44) **Jesus cried and said.**—Comp. Notes on chap. vii. 28, 37. This forbids our understanding these words of any private discourse addressed to the disciples. The phrase implies public teaching addressed to the multitude, and it may be inferred that there was some such teaching after verse 36.

(45) **He that believeth on me, believeth not on me.**—These words do not occur literally in any discourse of our Lord which we now have, but the thought has met us again and again. (Comp. chaps. v. 36; vii. 16 and 29; viii. 19; x. 38.) We are not to weaken the

but on him that sent me. (45) And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. (46) I am come a light into the world,[a] that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. (47) And if any man hear my words,[b] and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. (48) He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken,[c] the same shall judge him in the last day. (49) For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. (50) And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

CHAPTER XIII.—(1) Now before the feast of the passover,[d] when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the

[a] ch. 3. 19.

[b] ch. 3. 17.

A.D. 33.

[d] Matt. 26. 2.

[c] Mark 16. 16.

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words "not on Me but," into "not (only) on Me but," as is often done. Jesus came not in His own name (chap. v. 43), but in that of the Father. The Son claimed no position independent of the Father. He was the representative of the Father, and those who believed in Him believed not in the representative as apart from, but in that He represented, the Sender. The same thought occurs in St. Mark ix. 37. (Comp. Note there.)

(45) **And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.**—The word means to see, in the sense of "behold, contemplate, gaze upon." Better, therefore, *And he that beholdeth Me beholdeth Him that sent Me.* The form of the expression is different from that of the previous verse, passing from the negative to the positive, in accord with the difference of thought. He that beholdeth Christ doth behold Him, and in Him beholds the impression of the substance of God. The same thought has occurred in the words of the Evangelist in chap. i. 14, and occurs in the words of our Lord in chap. xiv. 9.

(46) **I am come a light into the world . . .**—(Comp. Note on verse 35 and chaps. iii. 19; viii. 12; ix. 5, 39; xii. 35, 36.)

**Should not abide in darkness.**—But should by walking according as they had the light become sons of light (verse 36).

(47) **And if any man hear my words, and believe not.**—The better reading is, . . . *and keep them not.* (Comp., for the words "hear" and "keep," Notes on Luke xi. 28 and xviii. 21.) For the thought of the verse comp. in this Gospel, Notes on chaps. iii. 17 *et seq.*; v. 24, 45 *et seq.*; viii. 15 *et seq.*; and the apparently opposite assertion in chap. ix. 39.

(48) **He that rejecteth me . . .**—The word rendered "rejecteth" (more exactly *nullifieth*) occurs only here in St. John. (Comp. Luke vii. 30, "The Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves"; and x. 16, "He that despiseth you despiseth Me.)

**Hath one that judgeth him.**—Comp. chaps. iii. 18 and v. 45 *et seq.*; viii. 50; and also Heb. iv. 12.

**The word that I have spoken.**—The very fact that He was so rejected was itself the judgment of those who rejected it.

(49) **For I have not spoken of myself.**—Comp. chaps. v. 30; vii. 16, 17, 28, 29; viii. 26, 28, 38. The word "for" connects this by way of reason with the condemnatory power of His word.

**The Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment.**—Comp. Note on chap. x, 18. The reference is to the commission of His Messianic life.

**What I should say, and what I should speak.**—It is clear that our Lord intends a distinction here between "saying" and "speaking." We have had the same distinction in chap. viii. 43. That which He should say was the matter of the revelation which He made; that which He should speak was rather the method in which He made it. He claims for all the authority and commission of the Father. Every truth uttered by Him, and every work and word by which it was uttered, was ordained by the Father's will. He was Himself the Word of God. Every tone and accent in which that Word spoke was divine.

(50) **And I know that his commandment is life everlasting.**—*i.e.*, the commission of the Messianic work. It is better to read here, as before, *eternal life.* (Comp. chap. iii. 15, *et al.*) The Son speaks not of Himself, but He speaks as executing this commission, which brings spiritual and eternal life to the world. It could not be otherwise. This commandment being eternal life, the whole teaching of the Messiah must simply be an utterance of it.

**As the Father said unto me, so I speak.**—This clause answers to "what I should say and what I should speak" in the last verse. The external revelation is regarded as the work of the Son. That which the Father says is the truth revealed, and the matter and form are here identified.

XIII.

[4. **The fuller Revelation, and Growth of Faith among the Disciples** (chaps. xiii. 1—xvii. 26).

(1) Love Manifested in Humiliation (chap. xiii. 1—30).

(*a*) *The washing of the disciples' feet* (verses 1—11);

(*b*) *The spiritual interpretation of this act* (verses 12—28).

(*c*) *The Betrayal. Hatred passes from the presence of love* (verses 21—30).]

(1) **Now before the feast of the passover.**—Comp. chaps. xii. 1, 12, 36, and *Excursus F: The Day of the Crucifixion of our Lord.*

**When Jesus knew that his hour was come . . .**—He knew during the course of His earthly work that His hour was not yet come, and again and again declared this. (Comp. Note on chaps. ii. 4; vii. 6; xi. 9.) Now He knows with equal certainty that the hour is at hand that He should depart unto the Father.

**Having loved his own which were in the world . . .**—By "his own" are here meant those who by believing on Him had received power to become the sons of God; those who by walking according as they had light were becoming sons of light. They are the true members of the family of God. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 11, 12.) The words as here used refer world, he loved them unto the end. (2) And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son,* to betray him; (3) Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; (4) he riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. (5) After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to

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specially to those who had been called by Him, and had left all and followed Him. He is the head of this family, and He knows that these His "little children" (verse 33) will be left as orphans (chap. xiv. 18). He would depart "out of the world;" they would be left "in the world," as sheep among wolves, and as sheep without their shepherd. St. John places these facts in touching contrast. His thoughts are for them and not for Himself. For Him there would be the return to the glory of His Father's throne, but His mind dwells on the bereavement and sorrow of those He leaves behind, and this moves Him to a special manifestation of His love.

**He loved them unto the end.**—It has been usual to explain these words of the continuance of our Lord's love—"Having loved His own, He continued to love them until the last moment." This is, of course, true, but is a truth so certain and necessary from every conception of our Lord's character as St. John has portrayed it, that we may doubt whether he would in this formal way state it. And though the phrase rendered "unto the end" sometimes means "finally"—as, *e.g.*, in the New Testament, Luke xviii. 5, and 1 Thess. ii. 16 (see Notes)—the sense, "unto the end" is very rare, and the general meaning is, "in the fullest degree," "up to the limit." It thus answers exactly to our "extremely."

What seems not to have been noted is that the whole sentence may be a common Hebrew idiom in Greek dress. It belongs to the simple syntax of a primitive people to express intensity by repetition. The Vale of Sodom was "pits, pits of bitumen" (Gen. xiv. 10). Esau asked Jacob to feed him with "that red, red, thing" (Gen. xxv. 30). The intensity of the verbal idea was expressed in like manner by a simple form of the verb which brought the thought before the mind, and then by the special form which denoted the action. This is sometimes preserved in the English, as, *e.g.*, in Gen. xx. 17—"That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed" (I will bless thee abundantly, and will multiply thy seed exceedingly). Sometimes it is not. We have, *e.g.*, in Amos ix. 8, "I will not *utterly* destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord," where the Hebrew is literally, "Destroying I will not destroy . . . (Vulgate, *conterens non conteram*). In these passages the English exactly follows the Greek—*i.e.*, the Greek in the passage of Genesis repeats the words as the Hebrew does, and in that of Amos, expresses the intensity by an adverbial phrase (εἰς τέλος). Now that phrase is exactly the same as the one used by St. John here, and which is rendered "unto the end." St. John was a Jew writing in Greek. May we not naturally expect a Hebrew thought in Greek form? He thinks of the intensity of our Lord's love, and speaks of it in the simple expressiveness of the old Hebrew phrase, "Loving, he loved them with fulness of love." (Comp. chap. xii. 13.) This is not given as an amended rendering, because authority has been sought for it without success; but it is offered, as an explanation, to the reader's judgment. The student will find in Schleusner's *Lexicon Veteris Testamenti* other instances which support this view.

(2) **And supper being ended.**—The reading here is uncertain, but neither reading justifies our translation. It should probably be, "And it now becoming supper time." As a matter of fact, the supper was not ended (verses 12 and 26); but they had already reclined, and were, as we say, ready for supper.

**The devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot.**—The better reading is, *The devil having now put it into the heart, that Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, should betray Him.* But the sense must be that of our version, "The heart of Judas" (the devil having suggested). The alternative interpretation, "the heart of the devil" (the devil having conceived) is opposed to all scriptural analogy. For the fact, comp. Notes on Matt. xxvi. 14, and Luke xxii. 3.

For "Judas Iscariot," comp. Notes on Matt. x. 14 and xxvi. 14. The name is given here in the sad fulness of this mournful record. The fact is recorded here to explain the references to Judas which follow in our Lord's words (verses 10, 18, 21, 26, 27, 30).

(3) **Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands . . .**—This explains the act of humility which follows. With the full consciousness of His supreme power and divine origin, and of the divine glory to which He was about to return; yes, because He was conscious of all this, He left the disciples an example of the self-denial which is the necessary outcome of love. "Subsisting in the form of God, He thought it not a thing to be grasped at to be equal with God, but emptied Himself by taking upon Him the form of a servant, and being made in the likeness of men" (Phil. ii. 6). (Comp. for the thought of the gift of all things, Notes on 1 Cor. xv. 25; Eph. ii. 22.)

(4) **He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments.**—Comp. Notes on Luke xxii. *et seq.* We there read of "a strife among them which of them should be accounted the greatest." It is placed by St. Luke after the Supper; but our Lord's words, "I am among you as he that serveth," point almost certainly to a connection with this parabolic act. There had been, we may well think, some self-assertion in acts or omissions, which He by His act rebukes. They may have claimed, each above his brother, the place of honour at the table, or it may be that no one had offered the customary refreshment of water for the feet, before sitting down to meat (Luke vii. 44). We cannot say what was the immediate cause which suggested His act, but if we attempt to realise the whole scene, we must believe that there was in the disciples themselves some such cause. The garment laid aside would be the outer garment, which would impede His action, leaving the tunic, which was the ordinary dress of a servant.

**And took a towel, and girded himself.**—This was itself a mark of the servant's position, and was meant to signify His assumption of the servant's work. The successive minute details of this picture carry with them their own authenticity.

(5) **After that he poureth water into a bason.**—Better, . . . *into the bason.* It was the bason in the room, commonly used, and now ready for such

wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded. (6) Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? (7) Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. (8) Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. (9) Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head. (10) Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash *his* feet, but is

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purposes. The water was at hand. All suggested then that one of the disciples might have performed this act which the Lord now performs. That it was commonly regarded as an act of reverence from an inferior to a superior is made clear by the Rabbinical passages quoted here by Schöttgen and Lightfoot. (Comp. Note on Luke vii. 44.)

**And began to wash the disciples' feet.**—The exactness of the narrative notes that the act was only begun, and was interrupted by the objection of Peter. This word "began" is frequent in the earlier Gospels, but it is only in this touch of accuracy that St. John uses it.

(6) **Then cometh he to Simon Peter.**—Men who have come to these words with minds full of opinions with regard to the position of St. Peter have, of course, understood them to express that he had precedence of the other Apostles; while others have formed the opinion that Judas Iscariot was first. It is a point of no importance, and cannot be determined. The natural impression from this verse, however, is that St. Peter's turn came after that of at least one other, and the impression from verses 24 and 25 is that St. John himself, being nearest to his Master, was that other.

**Lord, dost thou wash my feet?**—For the title, comp. Matt. xvi. 22. The word "Thou" is to be strongly emphasised, but the common error of reading "my" as an emphatic word is to be avoided. The act is in itself natural; perhaps is even one that he had expected from some of the less prominent in the apostolic band. What he cannot understand is that his Master should do it. "Lord, dost *Thou* wash my feet?" Comp. with this feeling of the Apostle at the close of our Lord's life that of John the Baptist at its commencement (Matt. iii. 14, 15).

(7) **What I do thou knowest not now.**—Here both pronouns are emphatic, and convey a rebuke to Peter. His words had almost implied that the Lord's act was wholly out of place, as of one who knew not what he was doing. The opposite was really the case. "What *I* do *thou* knowest not now."

**But thou shalt know hereafter**—*i.e.*, in the teaching which is to follow (verses 13—17). The word rendered "hereafter" is different from that rendered "afterwards" in verse 36. The precise meaning is "after these things." The sense, then, is "What *I* do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt come to know presently." (Comp. verse 17.)

(8) **Thou shalt never wash my feet.**—For the word "never," comp. Note on chap. viii. 51. The incidental touches of character where individual apostles are named in this Gospel are in striking agreement with the more fully-drawn character of the other evangelists, and the value of their evidence for the authorship cannot be over-estimated. They are perfectly artless, but are beyond the most consummate art. We feel that it is the loving, impulsive, but self-confident Peter of the earlier Gospels who is speaking here. He does not wait for that after-knowledge which our Lord promises him. He sees no ground on which our Lord's act can possibly be one which he can permit. Note that the emphasis is on the negative. The pronoun "my" is again not to be emphasised, nor is "Thou" in this passage. "Thou shalt *never* wash my feet."

**If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.**—Our Lord has already intimated (verse 7) that His deed was symbolic, and He now refers to the truth underlying the outer act. The key to His meaning is to be found in His own words in verses 13—17. By the act of washing their feet, He, their Lord, taught the spirit of self-sacrifice and love in opposition to the spirit of self-seeking and pride which ruled even in the Apostles' hearts. That lesson every servant and apostle of Jesus Christ must learn, for the servant is not greater than the Lord, nor the Apostle than the Sender. That lesson Peter was refusing to learn in the pride of his own impulsive will, which seemed to be humility. But unless he learns to accept the love of Christ's humiliation, and is so cleansed by its power that he yields his human will wholly to the divine, and learns in self-sacrifice what the spirit of Christ really is, he can have no part in Him. The lesson is a hard one, but it is necessary; the sacrifice of will may be harder than that of life; but the strong man must become as the little child before he can enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

For the phrase, "Thou hast no part with me," which is again a Hebrew thought in Greek dress, comp. Matt. xxiv. 51, and Luke xii. 46. It is frequent in the Old Testament. See, *e.g.*, Deut. xii. 12, "He hath no part nor inheritance with you."

(9) **Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.**—Peter still misunderstands the meaning; but he is true to his loving impulsive character. No part with his Master! He will give up anything, everything. He knows not what this washing means, and cannot conceive that it is fitting for Christ to wash his feet; but if it in any sense can mean having a part with Christ, then not the feet only, but the whole man.

(10) **He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet.**—Better, *He who has bathed . . .* St. Peter's words have implied that he was wholly unclean, and needed for feet, and head, and hands, for the whole man, a moral cleansing. Christ answers that this was not so. The man who has been bathed is clean, but his feet coming in contact with the dust of the road need to be washed. It was so morally. They had been cleansed; their whole moral life had been changed, but they were liable to the corruption of every-day life through which they walked, and needed to be cleansed from the pollution of it. That day had furnished an example; their pride and self-seeking was of the spirit of the world, and not of the spirit of Christ; His act was a cleansing from that, but it did not imply that they were not clean. The lesson is that all, from Apostles downwards, need the daily renewing of the grace of God; and that none should find in failure,

clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. (11) For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

(12) So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? (13) Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for *so* I am. (14) If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. (15) For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. (16) Verily, verily, I say unto you,[a] The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. (17) If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

(18) I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his

[a] Matt. 10. 24; ch. 15. 20.

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or even in the evil which clings to his daily path, reason for questioning the reality of the moral change which has made him the child of God.

**And ye are clean, but not all.**—This is the moral application, accompanied by the mournful thought that it was not true of all. One there was among those who had been bathed who had allowed evil to enter into his heart and pollute it. For him cleansing had been neglected, and the daily corruption of the world had remained; evil thoughts had been harboured, until at length they had made corrupt the whole man. (Comp. Note on chap. xv. 4.)

(11) **For he knew who should betray him.**—Comp. chap. xviii. 2, and Note on Matt. xxvi. 48. This is the first reference to the betrayal during the feast. The words are words of warning, spoken in the love which even then might have redeemed and cleansed the heart, if it had been open to receive it. The feet of Judas were washed by his Master. Had he learnt the lesson of humility and love, he might have conquered the foul spirit of ambition and covetousness which was carrying him to destruction.

(12) **And was set down again.**—This means in the reclining position customary at meals. Comp. Luke xi. 37; xxii. 14; and in this Gospel chaps. vi. 10 and xxi. 20. Here it implies that the washing the feet preceded the supper (verse 1).

**Know ye what I have done to you?**—This question is asked, not to be answered, but to direct their attention to what He had done, and to the interpretation which follows—"Do ye perceive what I have done? This is the meaning of it."

(13) **Ye call me Master and Lord**—*i.e.*, Master in the sense of Teacher. The word in the original is not "Rabbi." (Comp. Note on chap. xi. 28.) The Jewish pupils called their teachers "Rabbi" and "Mar" (Teacher), and it was not permitted to any pupil to call his teacher by his proper name (*Sanhedr.*, fol. 100, § 1). The word "Master" here refers to His position as their Teacher; the word Lord to the reverence which they paid to Him. These were the common titles of everyday life which He here asserts for Himself.

(14) **Ye ought also to wash one another's feet.**—The argument is *à fortiori*. If He had so humbled Himself as to do the work of a servant for them, much more ought they to humble themselves for each other. To make his words as striking as possible, they are prefaced by the emphatic *I*, and "Master and Lord" is repeated from the previous verse, but in the inverse order, to give special prominence to the word of greater dignity.

(15) **That ye should do as I have done to you.**—The example is in the principle, not in the specific act; it is not "that which I have done to you," but "according as I have done to you." The imitation is to be worked out in applying the same principle of love and self-sacrifice in all the varying circumstances of life in which we are placed.

(16) **The servant is not greater than his lord.**—These words have already occurred in the earlier Gospels in another connection. (Comp. Note on Matt. x. 24, and Luke vi. 40.) They occur again in this Gospel in chap. xv. 20.

(17) **If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.**—The first clause of this verse assumes their knowledge of the things which He had been teaching them (verses 13—17). They were, indeed, old lessons taught before in word, and now taught in act and word.

The second clause makes their blessedness depend upon their combining action with knowledge. They had known the truth before, but their knowledge had not profited them, and they needed on this very day to be taught them again.

(18) **I speak not of you all.**—The thought of their blessedness brings back again the dark thought that there is one present who will not do these things, and who cannot therefore be blessed.

**I know whom I have chosen.**—Comp. Note on chap. vi. 70. The pronoun is strongly emphatic. "*I* (for My part) know whom I have chosen." (See next verse.)

**But that the scripture may be fulfilled.**—Comp. Note on chap. xii. 38. There is an ellipsis after "but," which is most simply filled up by some such phrase as "all this was done;" "but all this was done that the Scripture . . ." (Comp. chap. xix. 36 and Matt. xvi. 36.) Others would make the connection to be, "But I have chosen them that the Scripture . . ."

**He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.**—Comp. especially Note on the quotation in chap. ii. 18, from Ps. lxi. The present words are a free rendering of the Greek (LXX.) of Ps. xli. 9; but the LXX. follow the Hebrew more literally, and read, "hath made great his heel." This is here interpreted to mean, "lifted up his heel," which the Bible version of the Psalm gives, with the literal rendering *magnified* in the margin. The Prayer Book version follows the Vulgate in reading "hath laid great wait for Me."

Our Lord's quotation omits the earlier part of the verse, "Mine own familiar friend whom I trusted." He knew whom He had chosen. "He knew what was in man, and did not trust Himself to them" (chap. ii. 24, 25).

It is by no means certain that we are justified in following the title of the Psalm, and ascribing it to David. It is not improbable that here, as in Ps. lxix., we have the words of Jeremiah, and the special reference to the friend is unknown. If the Psalm was by heel against me.[a] (19) Now[1] I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am *he*. (20) Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me;[b] and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

(21) When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.[c] (22) Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. (23) Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. (24) Simon Peter therefore beckoned to

[a] Ps. 41. 9.

[1] Or, *From henceforth.*

[c] Matt. 26. 21.

[b] Matt. 10. 40.

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David, then, as the king was the type of Christ, Ahithophel is doubtless the type of Judas. In any case the baseness of the treachery lay in the fact that the betrayer was one who did eat bread with the psalmist. He was, as our word expresses it, a "companion" (one who breaks bread with), but to this the Orientals attached a sacredness which even the Bedouin of the desert would honour. But there was one then professing to be His Apostle, eating bread with Him, and yet planning to betray Him.

(19) **Now I tell you before it come.**—The marginal rendering is to be preferred. (Comp. chaps. i. 52; xiv. 7.)

**Ye may believe that I am he.**—Comp. Note on chaps. viii. 24 and xiv. 29. The result of His henceforth declaring these things unto them before the events, will be that they will find confirmation of their faith in Him as the Messiah. Had He not then declared His knowledge of all, and traced even His choice of Judas to the will of God, there would have been room for doubt whether that choice was consistent with His being the Messiah.

(20) **He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me.**—The thoughts presented to their minds in the preceding verses are—(1) their mission as His servants; (2) the betrayal by one of their own number; (3) the announcement of this beforehand that in the event it may be a confirmation of their faith. They are to go forth, then, and to be content if their path is as that which their Master has trodden. They are not to be disheartened by treachery even in their midst, for this He had foreseen. The words spoken when they were called to be Apostles still hold true. Their honour and encouragement is in the fact that they are Apostles from Him, as He is an Apostle from the Father. This truth is one of those solemn utterances on which He would have them dwell, and is therefore introduced by "Verily, verily." (Comp. Note on chap. i. 51.) For the words, which are exactly the same as those of the first commission, comp. Note on Matt. x. 40.

(21) **He was troubled in spirit.**—Comp. Note on chap. xi. 33. He has spoken of the future of those who are true to their commission as Apostles. He now turns in deep emotion to him of whom those words cannot be spoken. The "Verily, verily," and the three verbs, "was troubled," "bare witness," "spake," perhaps imply that there was a pause in which His feeling checked His words, but that the witness to the truth demanded that they should be spoken, painful as they were. For the words themselves, comp. Note on Matt. xxvi. 21.

(22) **Then the disciples looked one on another.**—Comp. Matt. xxvi. 22 *et seq.*, and the parallel in Mark xiv. 19 and Luke xxii. 23. St. Matthew and St. Mark both state that they expressed their doubt in words, and St. Luke's narrative implies this questioning, but as addressed to one another, not to our Lord ("And they began to inquire among themselves"). St. John remembers the look of astonishment, and the way in which each tried to read the countenance of his brother as they all heard the words, which asserted that there was a traitor in their midst. He was nearest to our Lord, and knew what others may not have known, how Peter beckoned to him, and how he put the question to our Lord. This is the moment which has been caught in Leonardo da Vinci's famous masterpiece in the refectory of the Dominican Fathers at Milan. The painting itself has almost passed away, but perhaps no work of art is so widely known. The three Apostles mentioned in the text are all on the right of our Lord. John is nearest to Him, and leaning towards Peter, who stretches behind Judas to speak to "the disciple whom Jesus loved." Judas, clutching the bag and upsetting the salt, declaring in every feature of that wondrous face, which cost Da Vinci a whole year's study in the lowest quarter of the city, that he is the traitor, is on the right hand of John, and between him and Peter. This verse can have no better comment than a study of this great picture, accompanied by the chapter in Lanzi's *Storia Pittorica* or Mrs. Jameson's *Sacred and Legendary Art*, would provide, and Englishmen have a noble copy of it in their own National Gallery. (See the *Sacred and Legendary Art*, Ed. 3, 1857, vol. i., p. 209.)

(23) **Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom.**—Leonardo's picture is in one respect misleading, and, like most paintings of the Lord's Supper, has not represented the method in which the guests reclined rather than sat at table. Each leaned on his left arm, leaving the right arm free. The feet were stretched out behind the guest on his right hand, and the back of the head reached near to the bosom of the guest on the left. (Comp. Note on verse 25.) The Jews followed this Persian method of reclining on couches at meals from the time of the Captivity, and this method of eating the Passover had the special significance of security and possession of the Promised Land, as opposed to the attitude of one undertaking a journey, which was part of the original institution (Ex. xii. 11).

**One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved**—*i.e.*, John himself. (Comp. chap. xxi. 2, 7, 20—23, and *Introduction*, p. 375.) The same designation occurs also in chap. xix. 26.

(24) **Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him.**—The tense in the original is present. "Simon Peter therefore beckons," or, *makes a sign.* We have to remember that these Apostles were both members of the first group, who are from some special characteristics nearer to our Lord than the others. They had both been disciples of the Baptist (chap. i. 40, 41), and we may think of them in the earlier as in the later work as in a special sense companions and friends. (Comp. chap. xx. 2; Acts iii. 1; iv. 13.)

**That he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.**—The better reading is, *and saith unto him, Say who it is of whom He speaketh.* St. Peter supposes that the disciple whom Jesus loved is him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. (25) He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? (26) Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop,[1] when I have dipped *it.* And when he had dipped the sop, he gave *it* to Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon. (27) And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. (28) Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. (29) For some *of them* thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy *those things* that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. (30) He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.

[1] Or, *morsel.*

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more than any other in the confidence of his Master, and that he knew who was here referred to, and makes a sign to him to tell what he knew.

(25) **He then lying on Jesus' breast.**—Several good authorities, including the Vatican and the Cambridge MSS., insert the word "thus." "He then leaning thus . . . ," describes the action just as it took place (comp. Note on chap. iv. 6); but the balance of authority is against the insertion. The action is, however, exactly described in the original, for the words "lying" and "breast" are both different from those in verse 23. The English preserves this difference, but hardly conveys the full meaning. There the beloved disciple is described as reclining towards his Master's bosom. Here he leans upon (or leans back upon, as many good authorities read), the Master's breast, and asks Him the question, "Who is it?"

(26) **He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it.**—The better reading is probably, *He it is for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him;* but the change does not affect the sense. The pronouns are emphatic. "*He* it is for whom *I* . . ." The word "morsel" or "sop" occurs in the New Testament only in this context. The meaning is illustrated by the use in the LXX. in Ruth ii. 14 ("Come thou hither, and thou shalt eat of the bread and dip thy *morsel* in the vinegar"); and Job xxxi. 17 ("And if I ate my *morsel* alone, and did not impart it to the orphan"). The cognate verb occurs twice in the New Testament—Rom. xii. 20 and 1 Cor. xiii. 3. (See Notes on these passages.) The original root of the word means "to rub." Hence it is "anything rubbed or broken off." It was often used for a mouthful just like "morsel," which means literally, *a little bite.* As used here, the word means any portion of food. The general explanation that the morsel was dipped in the *Charosheth* (comp. Note on Matt. xxvi. 28) implies that this supper was the Paschal Supper. (See *Excursus F: The Day of the Crucifixion of our Lord.*)

Our Lord would preside at the meal, and distribute to each guest his portion. When John asked the question, He was about to give the morsel to Judas. He avoids the name, and makes the act which He is about to perform convey the answer to the question. That act is the token of friendship and love which even now would redeem the heart full of treachery, if that heart would but receive it. (Comp. verse 18.)

**He gave it to Judas Iscariot.**—Better, *He takes and gives . . . ,* with the majority of good MSS. Note the solemn and sad fulness with which the name of Judas is again given by the Evangelist. (Comp. verse 2.)

(27) **And after the sop Satan entered into him.**—The Greek expresses more vividly the very moment when the mind finally cast out love, and left itself as a possession for Satan. "And after the sop, *then* Satan entered into him." It was at that moment, when the last effort had been tried, and tried in vain, when the heart hardened itself to receive from Jesus the sacred pledge of love, while it was plotting in black hatred how to betray Him; it was then that hope took her flight from a realm of gloom where she could no longer dwell, and light ceased to shine in a darkness that would not comprehend it.

**Then said Jesus unto him.**—Better, *Jesus therefore said unto him.* It was because He read the secrets of the heart, and saw that it was wholly given up to evil that He said it.

**That thou doest, do quickly.**—The Greek is exactly, *more quickly.* "Carry out your plans even more quickly than you have proposed. Do the fatal deed at once. It is resolved, and every effort to win thee has failed. A fixed resolve is nothing less than the deed itself."

(28) **Now no man at the table knew.**—This is a comment of the Apostle's, as he writes in remembrance of the impression made at the time upon all who were present. They heard our Lord say to Judas, "What thou doest, do quickly;" but none of them knew until afterwards that these words referred to the betrayal.

(29) **Because Judas had the bag.**—Comp. Notes on chap. xii. 6.

**Buy those things that we have need of against the feast.**—Here, again, it will be better to postpone the consideration of details in the order of the events of this week, and to deal with the question as a whole. (Comp. *Excursus F: The Day of the Crucifixion of our Lord.*)

**That he should give something to the poor.**—Such gifts seem to have been made at all festivals. Their thought was probably of gifts to enable the poor to obtain the lamb and other requisites for keeping the Passover.

(30) **He then having received the sop.**—Comp. Note on verse 27. The narrative is resumed from that point, verses 28 and 29 being an explanatory note added by the writer. Returning to the record of what took place, he dwells again on the moment of receiving the sop as that in which the betrayer took the fatal step which could not be retraced.

**And it was night.**—These words doubtless state the physical fact that at the time when Judas left the room the darkness of night had already come on. He went out, and went out into the darkness of night. We cannot say that the writer meant them to express more than this, and yet we feel that there is in them a fulness of meaning that cannot have been unintentional. It was night; and he stepped forth from light into darkness; from the presence and guidance of the Light of the World, to be possessed by and guided by the prince of darkness. It was night; and St. John could

(31) Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. (32) If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. (33) Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews,[a] Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. (34) A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another;[b] as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. (35) By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

[a] ch. 7. 34.

[b] Lev. 19. 18; chap. 15. 17; 1 John 4. 21.

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hardly have written these words without remembering those he had written but a short time before: "If a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him." (See Note on chap. xi. 10.) Comp., for the way in which St. John gives emphasis to a tragic fulness of meaning by expressing it in a short detached sentence, chaps. xi. 35 and xviii. 40.

[(2) THE LAST WORDS OF DEEPEST MEANING TO THE FAITHFUL FEW (chaps. xiii. 31—xvi. 33).

- (*a*) *His glory is at hand, because He is going to the Father; they are therefore to love one another* (verses 31—38);
- (*b*) *In the Father's house He will receive them to Himself. He is the Way, the Truth, the Life* (chap. xiv. 1—10);
- (*c*) *Being in the Father, He will be present in the disciples* (verses 11—24):
  - (α) By answering their prayers (verses 12—14);
  - (β) By sending to them the Paraclete (verses 13—17);
  - (γ) By abiding in them (verses 18—24).
- (*d*) *His legacy of peace to them* (verses 25—31).]

(31) **Now is the Son of man glorified.**—Comp. Notes on chaps. xi. 4; xii. 28. The going out of Judas is the sign that the betrayal and death of the Son of Man was at hand. In that was the glory of His accomplished work, and He speaks of this glory as present. It lies so immediately before Him that it is at once realised; and the brightness of the vision overpowers all thought of the darkness of the path which leads to it.

**God is glorified in him.**—This is a re-statement of the thought which has met us whenever the work of the Son has been dwelt upon. It was the Father's work too. The glory of the Son of Man in the redemption of the world was the glory of God, who gave His only-begotten Son, that by Him the world might be saved. There is a contrast drawn here between the humanity and the divinity united in the person of our Lord. In Him, *i.e.*, in His person, in the person of the Son of Man suffering and crucified, there were manifested the attributes of the majesty and glory of God. It was an utterance to the world, in a fulness never heard before, of the Justice, Holiness, and Love which are the nature of God.

(32) **If God be glorified in him.**—These words are omitted by a majority of the best MSS.

**God shall also glorify him in himself.**—The tense now changes to the future, and the glory thought of is that of the Father's throne. The words "in Himself," refer to "God," not to "the Son of Man." The thought is that the humiliation by which God is manifested to the world is the glory of God in the person of the Son of Man, and that this shall be followed by the glory of the Son of Man in the person of God, not simply and generally by His return to the glory of the pre-incarnate state, but by His return to it as the Son of Man. (Comp. Notes on chap. xvii. 4, 5.)

**And shall straightway glorify him.**—This accounts for the present tense of the last verse. The whole is present to His mind as occurring forthwith.

(33) **Little children, yet a little while I am with you.**—The thought of His own glory brings with it the thought of their state of orphanage when He shall have departed from them, and He addresses them as "Little children," with a word of tenderness spoken only here by Him. The word impressed itself upon the mind of St. John, and it occurs elsewhere in the New Testament only in his First Epistle (ii. 1, 12, 28; iii. 7, 18; iv. 4; v. 21), and in an uncertain reading in the striking words of St. Paul, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." (See Note on Gal. iv. 19, and comp. *Introduction*, p. 371.)

For the remainder of the verse, see Notes on chaps. vii. 33, 34, and viii. 21.

(34) **A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another.**—There is no reference in the context to the Ten Commandments, and we are not therefore to seek the meaning of the "new commandment" in any more or less full contrast with them. They also taught that a man should love his neighbour as himself; and the fulfilment of the law is love. The contrast here is between what our Lord had said unto the Jews and what He now says to the disciples. He had said, and says again, "Whither I go ye cannot come." To the Jews he added, "Ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins" (chap. vii. 34, 35). For those who believe in Him, He has no such decree of separation, but a new and different commandment, by which His spiritual presence would be at once realised and proved. Love to one another, and therefore sacrifice of self for another's good, would be, in the truest sense, a realisation of His presence in their midst. (Comp. Note on 1 John ii. 8.)

For the meaning of the word "commandment," comp. Note on chap. x. 18.

**As I have loved you.**—More exactly, *Even as I loved you.* (Comp. Note on verse 1.) The punctuation of our version is to be maintained. It is not, as it has sometimes been read, "That ye love one another, as I have loved you . . ." The earlier clause gives the principle of the new commandment. The latter clause repeats this, and prefaces the repetition by words referring to His own acts of love, which should be an example for them. The word "as," or "even as," does not refer to the degree of His love, but to the fact; and the special instance of love then present to the mind was the feet-washing upon which the whole of this discourse has followed.

(35) **By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples.**—The thought of their state of orphanage when He should depart from them is still present. He gives them a bond of union, by which they should

(36) Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. (37) Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.[a] (38) Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

A.D. 33.

CHAPTER XIV.—(1) Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. (2) In my Father's

[a] Matt. 26. 33.

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always be linked to Him and to each other in the principle of love. The followers of great Teachers and Rabbis had their distinctive marks. Here was the distinctive Christian mark, which all men should be able to read. It is instructive that the characteristic mark of Christianity should thus be asserted by its Founder to consist, not in any formulary or signs, but in the love which asserts the brotherhood of man. The apologists of the first centuries delighted in appealing to the striking fact of the common love of Christians, which was a new thing in the history of mankind; and while the Church has sometimes forgotten the characteristic, the world never has. By their love for each other, for mankind, for God, is it known or denied that men who call themselves Christians are really Christ's disciples.

(36) **Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou?**—Comp. verse 33. The earnest, loving nature of the Apostle dwells upon the words which tell of the Master's departure. He is prepared to follow Him to danger, or even to death, and, that he may do so, asks whither it is that He is going.

**Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now.**—Our Lord does not give the answer which St. Peter had sought, but repeats the statement of verse 33. For St. Peter, as for the others, the place must be prepared and the way opened before they could follow (chap. xiv. 2). For him, as for his Master, the day's work was to be done before the night would come, and it was not done yet. But that night would come, and he would hereafter follow his Master in a more literal sense than any of which he thought. (See Notes on chap. xxi. 18, 19.)

(37) **Lord, why cannot I follow thee now?**—True to his impulsive, self-confident character, St. Peter is impatient of the delay imposed upon him. He is ready, in the fulness of his love, now, and does not dream that in the moment of trial he will be found wanting.

(38) **Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake?**—Comp. for this phrase Note on chap. x. 11. The pronouns are emphatic, and there is a solemn emphasis in the repetition of what St. Peter had said. He was using words of which he knew not the full meaning. He spoke of laying down his life for his Lord. He would hereafter be able to follow, because his Lord would lay down His own life for him.

For the remainder of the verse, comp. Notes on Matt. xxvi. 34; Mark xiv. 30; and Luke xxii. 34.

## XIV.

(1) **Let not your heart be troubled.**—The division of chapters is unfortunate, as it breaks the close connection between these words and those which have gone immediately before. The prophecy of St. Peter's denial had followed upon the indication of Judas as the traitor, and upon the announcement of the Lord's departure. These thoughts may well have brought troubled hearts. The Lord had Himself been troubled as the darkness drew on (chaps. xii. 27; xiii. 21), and He calms the anxious thoughts that He reads in the souls of the disciples.

**Ye believe in God, believe also in me.**—It is more natural to take both these clauses as imperative—*Believe in God, believe also in Me.* Our English version reads the first and last clauses of the verse as imperative, and the second as an indicative, but there is no good reason for doing so; and a sense more in harmony with the context is got by reading them all as imperatives. As a matter of fact, the present trouble of the hearts of the disciples arose from a want of a true belief in God; and the command is to exercise a true belief, and to realise the presence of the Father, as manifested in the person of the Son. There was a sense in which every Jew believed in God. That belief lay at the very foundation of the theocracy; but like all the axioms of creeds, it was accepted as a matter of course, and too often had no real power on the life. What our Lord here teaches the disciples is the reality of the Fatherhood of God as a living power, ever present with them and in them; and He teaches them that the love of God is revealed in the person of the Word made flesh. This faith is the simplest article of the Christian's creed. We teach children to say, we ourselves constantly say, "I believe in God the Father." Did we but fully grasp the meaning of what we say, the troubles of our hearts would be hushed to silence; and our religion would be a real power over the whole life, and would be also, in a fulness in which it never has been, a real power over the life of the world.

(2) **In my Father's house are many mansions.**—The Greek word used for "house" here is slightly different from that used of the material temple on earth in chap. ii. 16. The exact meaning will be at once seen from a comparison of 2 Cor. v. 1, the only other passage in the New Testament where it is used metaphorically. The Jews were accustomed to the thought of heaven as the habitation of God; and the disciples had been taught to pray, "Our Father, which art in heaven." (Comp. Ps. xxiii. 13, 14; Isa. lxiii. 15; Matt. vi. 9; Acts vii. 49; and especially Heb. ix.)

The Greek word for "mansions" occurs again in the New Testament only in verse 23, where it is rendered "abode." Wiclif and the Geneva version read "dwellings." It is found in the Greek of the Old Testament only in 1 Macc. vii. 38 ("Suffer them not to continue any longer"—"give them not an abode"). Our translators here followed the Vulgate, which has "mansiones" with the exact meaning of the Greek, that is, "resting-places," "dwellings." In Elizabethan English the word meant no more than this, and it now means no more in French or in the English of the North. A *maison* or a *manse*, is not necessarily a modern English mansion. It should also be noted that the Greek word is the substantive answering to the verb which is rendered "dwelleth" in verse 10, and "abide" in chap. xv. 4—10 (see Note there).

"Many" is not to be understood, as it often has house are many mansions: if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. (3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also. (4) And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. (5) Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? (6) Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (7) If ye had known me, ye should have known

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been, simply or chiefly of different degrees of happiness in heaven. Happiness depends upon the mind which receives it, and must always exist, therefore, in varying degrees, but this is not the prominent thought expressed here, though it may be implied. The words refer rather to the extent of the Father's house, in which there should be abiding-places for all. There would be no risk of that house being overcrowded like the caravanserai at Bethlehem, or like those in which the Passover pilgrims, as at this very time, found shelter at Jerusalem. Though Peter could not follow Him now, he should hereafter (chap. xiii. 36); and for all who shall follow Him there shall be homes.

**If it were not so, I would have told you.**—These words are not without difficulty, but the simplest, and probably truest, meaning is obtained by reading them as our version does. They become then an appeal to our Lord's perfect candour in dealing with the disciples. He had revealed to them a Father and a house. That revelation implies a home for all. Were there not "many mansions" the fulness of His teaching could have had no place. Had there been limitations He must have marked them out.

**I go to prepare a place for you.**—The better MSS. read, "For I . . ," connecting the clause with the earlier part of the verse. He is going away to prepare a place for them; and this also proves the existence of the home. There is to be then no separation; He is to enter within the veil, but it is to be as Forerunner on our behalf (Heb. vi. 20). "When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers."

(3) **And if I go and prepare . . .**—For the form of the expression, comp. Notes on chap. xii. 32, and 1 John ii. 28. It does not imply uncertainty, but expresses that the fact is in the region of the future, which is clear to Him, and will unfold itself to them.

**I will come again, and receive you unto myself.**—This clause has been variously explained of the resurrection; of the death of individual disciples; of the spiritual presence of our Lord in the Church; of the coming again of the Lord in the *Parousia* of the last day, when all who believe in Him shall be received unto Himself. The difficulty has arisen from taking the words "I will come again," as necessarily referring to the same time as those which follow—"I will receive you unto Myself," whereas they are in the present tense, and should be literally rendered, *I am coming again.* They refer rather, as the same words refer when used in verse 18, to His constant spiritual presence in their midst; whereas the reception of them to Himself is to be understood of the complete union which will accompany that spiritual presence; a union which will be commenced in this life, advanced by the death of individuals, and completed in the final coming again. (Comp. chap. xvii. 24.)

(4) **And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.**—The better reading is, *And whither I go, ye know the way, i.e.,* "Ye know that I am the way to the Father, whither I am going." (Comp. verse 6, and chap. xiii. 33.) They did not, indeed, fully know this, but the means of knowing it was within their reach, and His own words had declared it. (Comp., *e.g.*, chaps. x. 1 and xi. 25.) They ought to have known it, and His words now are meant to contrast what they ought to have known with what they really did know, in order that He may more fully instruct them. To know our ignorance, is the first step to its removal.

(5) **Thomas saith unto him.**—Comp., for the character of Thomas, chaps. xi. 16; xx. 24; xxi. 2.

**Lord, we know not whither thou goest.**—Our Lord's words had laid stress upon the "way." Thomas lays stress upon the "whither." His mind seeks for measured certainty. In all that he has heard of the Father's house of many mansions, of being with the Lord, there is much that he cannot understand. The Messiah, they thought, was to reign upon earth. Where was this vast royal home, with dwelling-places for all, to which Christ was going first, and to which they were to follow? They know not whither, and without that knowledge they cannot even think of the way.

(6) **I am the way.**—The pronoun is emphatic, "*I*, and none besides Me." "The way" is again made prominent, reversing the order which Thomas had used. He and He only is the means through which men can approach to the Father. (Comp. Notes on chap. i. 18, and on 1 Tim. ii. 5.)

**The truth, and the life.**—Better, *and the Truth, and the Life.* The thought of His being the Way through which men come to the Father is the reverse side of the thought that in Him the Father is revealed to men, that He is Himself the Eternal Truth, that He is Himself the Source of eternal life. (Comp. chaps. i. 14, 17; vi. 50, 51; xi. 25, 26.) Had they known what His earlier words meant, they would have had other than temporal and local thoughts of the Father's house, and would have known Him to be the Way.

**No man cometh unto the Father, but by me.**—This was the answer to the doubt of Thomas. This was the true "whither" which they knew not. The thought of heaven is not of a place far above, or of a time far before, but of a state now and hereafter. To receive the Truth and the Life revealed in the presence of the Son is to come to the Father by the only Way. To be with the Father is home. (Comp. Notes on chaps. i. 18, and iii. 13.)

(7) **If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.**—The thought here is made quite plain by what has preceded; but the form in which it is expressed demands attention. The emphasis of the first part of the sentence is not upon "Me" as is generally supposed, but upon "known." In the second part the emphatic words are "My Father." The English word "known" represents two Greek words in the better text which are not identical in meaning. The former means, to know by observation, the latter to know by reflection. It is the difference between *connaître* and *savoir*; between *kennen* (ken, k(e)now), and *wissen* (wit, wisdom). We may express the meaning more exactly

my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. (8) Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. (9) Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father? (10) Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. (11) Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. (12) Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth

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thus, "If ye had *recognised* Me, ye would have known *My Father* also." If ye had recognised who I really am, ye would have known that I and My Father are one.

**And from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.**—Comp. chap. xiii. 31, where the glorifying of the Son of Man is regarded as in the future which is immediately present. He can, therefore, say that from this time onwards, after the full declaration of Himself in verses 6 and 9 *et seq.*, they know and have seen the Father.

(8) **Philip saith unto him.**—Comp. for the character of Philip chaps. i. 44 *et seq.*; vi. 5 *et seq.*; xii. 21 *et seq.* He is joined with Thomas at the head of the second group of the Apostles, in Acts i. 13.

**Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.**—He catches at the word "seen" and thinks of some revelation of the glory of God as that vouchsafed to Moses, or it may be of a vision like that which three of their number had seen, and of which others had heard, in the Mount of Transfiguration. One such vision of the Father, he thinks, would remove all their doubts; and would satisfy the deepest longings of their hearts.

(9) **Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?**—More exactly, . . . *hast thou not recognised Me*, as in verse 7. Comp. the reference in verse 8, from which it will be seen that Philip was one of the first-called disciples, and had occupied a prominent position in the band of Apostles. There is in our Lord's words a tone of sadness and of warning. They utter the loneliness of a holiness and greatness which is not understood. The close of life is at hand, and Philip, who had followed Him from the first, shows by this question that he did not even know what the work and purposes of that life had been. They speak to all Christian teachers, thinkers, workers. There is a possibility that men should be in the closest apparent nearness to Christ, and yet have never learnt the meaning of the words they constantly hear and utter; and have never truly known the purpose of Christ's life.

**He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.**—Comp. Note on verse 7, and Philip's own answer to Nathanael, "Come and see" (chap. i. 46). The demand of Philip is one which is constantly being read, and the answer is one that constantly holds good. Men are ever thinking and saying, "Shew us the Father and it sufficeth us." "Give us something in religion upon which the soul can rest. We are weary of the doubts, and strifes, and dogmas which are too often called religion. We want something which can be real food for the soul. We cannot feed upon the husks which the swine do eat; and we believe that in the Father's house there is, even for the hired servants, bread enough and to spare. We are not irreligious, but we are impatient of what is put before us as religion. Give us truth! Give us life! Let it be free and open as the air of heaven, and we will gladly accept it, embrace it, live it." All this is the heart of the child seeking the presence of the Father. That Father has been manifested in the person of the Son. In the Life and Truth revealed in Him is the full revelation of God. In Him is the Bread of Life to satisfy every want of every man. He that hath seen Him hath seen the Father. How then can men say, Shew us the Father? (Comp. Note on chap. xii. 44, 45.)

(10) **Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?**—Comp. Note on chap. x. 38. He had there taught this truth to the Jews; but Philip's words seem to show that even the disciples did not fully receive it. The order of the clauses is reversed here, in accordance with the thought of the context, which is of knowledge of the Son, and of the Father through the Son.

**The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself.**—This refers not to His present teaching only or chiefly, but to the whole of His manifestation of the character and attributes of God. All His words had been a revelation of the Father whom Philip now asks to see. (Comp. chap. viii. 38.)

**But the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.**—The better reading is, *but the Father that dwelleth in Me doeth His own works.* This is the proof that He does not speak of Himself; and both clauses are together the proof of the indwelling of the Son in the Father and the Father in the Son. The works manifested in time in the power of the Incarnate Word are not His works, but those of the Father, who abides in the Son, and is revealed through Him. (Comp. chap. viii. 28, and Note there.)

(11) **Believe me that I am in the Father.**—He passes now from Philip, and addresses Himself to the whole body of the apostles. He claims from them a personal trust in Himself, which should accept His statement that He and the Father were immanent in each other.

**Or else believe me for the very works' sake.**—If they cannot receive the truth on the testimony of His word, He will take lower ground with them. He will place before them the evidence He had placed before the Jews. Let them, if they will not hear Him, believe on account of the very works which He had done. (Comp. Note on chaps. v. 19, 20, and x. 37, 38.)

(12) **Verily, verily, I say unto you.**—Comp. Note on chap. i. 51.

**He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also.**—He that by faith becomes one with the Son shall have the Son, and therefore also the Father, dwelling in him (verses 11, 20, 23), and shall himself become an instrument through which God, who dwelleth in him, shall carry into effect His own works. He shall, therefore, do works of the same kind as those which the Son Himself doeth.

on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. (13) And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do,[a] that the Father may be glorified in the Son. (14) If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do *it*.

[a] Matt. 7. 7.

(15) If ye love me, keep my commandments. (16) And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; (17) *even* the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye

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**And greater works than these shall he do.**—Comp. Notes on chap. v. 20, and on Matt. xxi. 21, 22. The explanation of these greater works is not to be sought in the individual instances of miraculous power exercised by the apostles, but in the whole work of the Church. The Day of Pentecost witnessed the first fulfilment of this prophecy; but it has been fulfilled also in every great moral and spiritual victory. Every revival of a truly religious spirit has been an instance of it; every mission-field has been a witness to it. In every child of man brought to see the Father, and know the Father's love as revealed in Jesus Christ, has been a work such as He did. In the world-wide extent of Christianity there is a work greater even than any which He Himself did in the flesh. He left His kingdom as one of the smallest of the influences on the earth; but it has grown up as a mighty power over all the kingdoms of the world, and all that is purest and best in civilisation and culture has found shelter in its branches.

**Because I go unto my Father.**—The better reading is, *because I go unto the Father.* The words are to be connected not with one clause only, but with all the earlier parts of the verse. They are the reason why the believer shall do the works that Christ does, as well as the reason why he shall do greater works. The earthly work of Christ will have ceased, and He will have gone to the Father. The believers will be then His representatives on earth, as He will be their representative in heaven. Therefore will they do His works, and the works shall be greater because He will be at the Father's right hand, and will do whatsoever they shall ask in His name.

(13) **And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do.**—Comp. chaps. xv. 16, and xvi. 23. The prayer is thought of as addressed to the Father; but the answer here, and still more emphatically in the following verse, is thought of as coming from the Son, who is one with the Father. The width and limitation of the promise are both to be noted. It is "*whatsoever* ye shall ask," and it is "ask *in My name.*" This means, as My representatives on earth (comp. Notes on previous verse), as persons doing My work, living in My spirit, seeking as I have sought to do the will of the Father. It follows from this that personal petitions are not contemplated here, except as far as they are for the glory of God; and that petitions asked in ignorance may be most truly answered when they are not granted. The prayer of Gethsemane—"If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done," should teach what prayer in the name and spirit of Christ means. We commonly attach to our prayers, "through Jesus Christ our Lord." We do not always bear in mind that this implies an absolute self-sacrifice, and is a prayer that our very prayers may not be answered except in so far as they are in accordance with the divine will. (Comp. Note on 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.)

**That the Father may be glorified in the Son.**—Comp. Notes on chaps. xi. 4; xii. 28; xiii. 31.

(14) **If ye shall ask any thing in my name.**—This is an emphatic repetition of the width of the promise and of its condition. In the second clause of the verse the pronoun "I" bears the stress. "*I* (on My part) will do it." In the parallel passage in chaps. xv. 16 and xvi. 23 the Father is thought of as answering the prayer. The passage from one thought to the other is possible because the Father and Son are thought of as one.

(15) **If ye love me, keep my commandments.**—Comp. Notes on verse 17; chaps. xiii. 34, and xv. 10. The connection here is through the condition "in My name," which includes willing obedience to His commands. The word "My" is emphatic—"The commandments which ye have received from Me." Those of this last discourse are perhaps prominent in the thought.

(16) **And I will pray the Father.**—Comp. Note on chap. xvi. 26. The pronoun is again emphatic—"I have given you your part to do. I on My part will pray the Father." The word used for "pray" is one which implies more of nearness of approach and of familiarity than that which is rendered "ask" in verse 14. It is the word which John regularly uses when he speaks of our Lord as praying to the Father, and occurs again in chaps. xvi. 26; xvii. 9, 15, 20. The distinction is important, but it has sometimes, perhaps, been unduly pressed. Both words occur in 1 John v. 16. (See Note there.)

**And he shall give you another Comforter.**—The better rendering is probably *another Advocate.* The word is used of the third person in the Holy Trinity here, and in verse 26, and in chaps. xv. 26, and xvi. 7. In each of these instances it is used by our Lord. It is found once again in the New Testament, and is there applied by St. John to our Lord Himself (1 John ii. 1). In the Gospel the English version uniformly translates it by "Comforter." In the Epistle it is rendered by "Advocate." But the whole question is of so much interest and importance that it will be convenient to deal with it in a separate Note. (Comp. *Excursus G: The Meaning of the word Paraclete.*) The word "another" should be observed as implying that which the Epistle states—the advocacy of the second Person in the Trinity, as well as that of the third.

**That he may abide with you for ever.**—The thought of the permanent abiding is opposed to the separation which is about to take place between them and the person of our Lord. He would come again to them in the person of the Paraclete, whom He would send to them (verse 18), and this spiritual presence should remain with them for ever. (Comp. Note on Matt. xxviii. 20.)

(17) **Even the Spirit of truth.**—Comp. chaps. xv. 26, and xvi. 13, and 1 John v. 6. He is called the Spirit of Truth, because part of His special office is to bring truth home to the hearts of men, to carry it from the material to the moral sphere, to make it something more than a collection of signs seen or heard—a living power in living men.

know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. (18) I will not leave you comfortless:[1] I will come to you. (19) Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. (20) At that day ye shall know that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. (21) He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. (22) Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the

[1] Or, *orphans.*

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**Whom the world cannot receive.**—The Holy Spirit can be received only by those who have the spiritual faculty. It cannot be otherwise. The unbelieving world, caring only for things of the senses, has lost its spiritual perception. It has no eye to see and no heart to know spiritual things, for they are spiritually discerned. (Comp. Note on 1 Cor. ii. 14.)

**But ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.**—The better text is, . . . . *and is in you.* The verbs are in the present tense, describing the receptivity of the disciples as opposed to the moral blindness of the world. They had, during our Lord's work and teaching in their midst, exercised and strengthened their spiritual faculties. They had in part received the Spirit, and by that reception were prepared for the fuller gift. They knew Him. He was in their midst. He was then, and therefore should be in the future, a living power, dwelling in their inmost life.

(18) **I will not leave you comfortless.**—Better with the margin, *I will not leave you orphans,* which exactly represents the Greek word. "Comfortless" is unfortunate, as it suggests a connection with "Comforter" which does not exist in the original. Our translators have rendered the word by "fatherless" in James i. 27, which is the only other passage where it occurs in the New Testament, and Wiclif has "faderless" here. He thinks of them as His children whom He is leaving in the world (comp. chap. xiii. 33), but He will not leave them destitute and bereaved.

**I will come to you.**—This coming, as is shown by the whole context, is the spiritual presence in the person of the Paraclete.

(19) **Yet a little while.**—Comp. chaps. xiii. 33 and xvi. 16.

**But ye see me**—*i.e.,* in the spiritual presence of the Paraclete. The words may indeed have their first fulfilment in the appearances of the forty days (comp. Acts x. 41), but these appearances were themselves steps in the education which was leading the disciples from a trust in the physical to a trust in the spiritual presence. (Comp. chap. xx. 17.) To the world the grave seemed the closing scene. They saw Him no more; they thought of Him as dead. To the believers who had the power to see Him He appeared as living, and in very deed was more truly with them and in them than He had been before.

**Because I live, ye shall live also.**—Better, *for I live, and ye shall live.* Our Lord speaks of His own life in the present. It is the essential life of which He is Himself the Source, and which is not affected by the physical death through which He is about to pass. They also who believe in Him shall have even here this principle of life, which in them too shall be affected by no change, but shall develop into the fulness of the life hereafter. Because He lives, and because they too shall live, therefore shall they see Him and realise His presence when the world seeth Him no more.

(20) **At that day ye shall know**—*i.e.,* the day of the gift of the Comforter, in whom Christ shall come to them. In the first reference the Day of Pentecost is meant, but the words hold good of every spiritual quickening, and will hold good of the final coming in the last day. The pronoun "ye" is emphatic—"Ye shall know for yourselves."

**That I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.**—Comp. Note on chap. x. 38. The result of this spiritual illumination would be that they should of themselves know the immanence of the Son in the Father, and their own union with the Father through Him. They ask now (verse 8) for a manifestation of the Father. The Spirit should so bring the life of Christ to their hearts that they would read in it the manifestation of the Father, and feel that in and through that life their own spirit has communion with God. The Spirit would witness with their spirit that they were the children of God. They would seek no longer for a Theophany from without, but in the depth of their inmost lives would cry, "Abba, Father."

(21) **He that hath my commandments.**—Comp. verse 15 and chap. v. 36. This verse points out the successive degrees which led up to the full manifestation of Christ. The first step is the moral apprehension and practical observance of our Lord's commandments, which necessarily result from love to Christ.

**He it is that loveth me.**—The next step is the special receptivity of the Father's love which he who loves Christ possesses, and therefore there is a special sense in which the Father loves him. The words express with fulness of emphasis, "*He* it is, and he only."

**And I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.**—The special love of the Son follows from the special love of the Father, and is accompanied by the full manifestation of the Son. This is further explained in verse 23.

(22) **Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot.**—That he was "not Iscariot" is mentioned to distinguish him beyond all possibility of confusion from him who had gone out into the darkness, and was no longer one of their number (chap. xiii. 30). He is commonly identified with "Lebbæus whose surname was Thaddæus" (comp. Note on Matt. x. 3), and was a brother or son of James (Luke vi. 15).

**How is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?**—The word "manifest" has brought to the mind of Judas, as the word "see" had to the mind of Philip (verse 7), thoughts of a visible manifestation such as to Moses (Ex. xxxiii. 13, 18), and such as they expected would attend the advent of the Messiah (Mal. iii. 1). But it was contrary to every thought of the Messiah that this manifestation should be to a few only. His reign was to be the judgment of the Gentiles, and the establishment of the Theocracy.

The words rendered, "How is it that . . .?" mean literally, *What has happened that . . .?* The words world? (23) Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. (24) He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

(25) These things have I spoken unto you, being *yet* present with you. (26) But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. (27) Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I

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of our Lord, speaking of His manifestation, take Judas by surprise. He wonders whether anything has occurred to cause what he thinks a departure from the Messianic manifestation.

(23) **If a man love me, he will keep my words.**—Our Lord repeats the condition necessary on the part of man in order that the manifestation of God to him may be possible. This is an answer to the question of Judas, the world in its unbelief and rejection of Christ's words, and without the spirit of love, could not receive this manifestation.

**We will come unto him, and make our abode with him.**—For the plural, comp. Note on chap. x. 30. For the word "abode," comp. Note on verse 2. The thought of God as dwelling in the sanctuary and among the people was familiar to the disciples from the Old Testament Scriptures (see, *e.g.*, Ex. xxv. 8; xxix. 45; Lev. xxvi. 11, 12; Ezek. xxxvii. 26), and the thought of the spiritual temple in the heart of man was not unknown to contemporary writers. Philo has a remarkable parallel in his treatise, *De Cherubim*, p. 124, "Since therefore He (God) thus invisibly enters into the region of the soul, let us prepare that place, in the best way the case admits of, to be an abode worthy of God; for if we do not, He, without our being aware of it, will quit us and migrate to some other habitation which shall appear to Him to be more excellently provided" (Bohn's ed., vol. i., p. 199. See the whole of chap. xxix.). Schöttgen, in his note, quotes from a Rabbinical writer who says, "Blessed is the man who strives daily to make himself approved unto God, and prepares himself to receive the divine guest." (Comp. 1 Cor. iii. 16; vi. 19; and Rev. iii. 20.)

(24) **He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings.**—He has shown in the previous verse how the Father and the Son can take up their abode in the hearts of the believers. He now shows how they could not be manifested to the hearts of the world. He that loveth not Christ keepeth not His word, and that word is the Father's. He has rejected the love of God which is revealed in the Son, and has Himself closed the channels of communion with God. God cannot dwell with him because there is in him nothing which can be receptive of the Divine Presence.

(25) **These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.**—Better, . . . *while abiding with you.* He was about to depart from them. He had been speaking to them words which they found it hard to understand. He now pauses in His teaching, and proceeds to tell them of the Holy Spirit who should interpret His words to them.

(26) **But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost.**—Better, as before, *but the Advocate* . . . (Comp. *Excursus G: The Meaning of the word Paraclete.*) For the words "Holy Ghost" comp. chaps. vii. 39 and xx. 22, which are the only passages where we find them in this Gospel. They are frequent in the earlier Gospels. (See Note on Matt. xii. 31.) In four passages in the New Testament (Luke xi. 3; Eph. i. 13; iv. 30; 1 Thess. iv. 8) our translators have preferred the rendering "Holy Spirit." The identification here with the Advocate brings out the contrast between the practical obedience and holiness (verse 23) of those to whom the Holy Spirit should be sent, and the disobedience (verse 24) of those who rejected the revelation by the Son.

**Whom the Father will send in my name**—*i.e.*, as My representative. (Comp. verse 13.) Their Master will depart from them, but the Father will send them another Teacher who will make clear to them the lessons they have already heard, and teach them things which they cannot bear now.

**He shall teach you all things.**—Comp. chap. xvi. 13. The words are here without an expressed limitation, but the "all things" here is equal to the "all truth" in the later passage.

**And bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.**—The limitation, "whatsoever I have said unto you," is to be taken with this clause only, and is not to be extended to the words, "He shall teach you all things." For instances of the recurrence of words spoken by our Lord with a fulness of new meaning revealed in them by the Holy Spirit, comp. chaps. ii. 22 and xii. 16. The Gospel according to St. John, with its full records of the words spoken by our Lord, is itself a commentary on this text.

(27) **Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.**—The immediate context speaks of His departure from them (verses 25 and 28), and it is natural therefore to understand these words as suggested by the common Oriental formulas of leave-taking. Men said to each other when they met and parted, "Shalom! Shalom!" (Peace! Peace!) just as they say the "Salaam! Salaam!" in our own day. (See 1 Sam. i. 17; Luke vii. 50; Acts xvi. 36; Jas. ii. 16; Eph. vi. 23; 1 Pet. v. 14; 3 John 15.)

He will leave them as a legacy the gift of "peace." And this peace is more than a meaningless sound or even than a true wish. He repeats it with the emphatic "My," and speaks of it as an actual possession which He imparts to them. "Peace on earth" was the angels' message when they announced His birth; "peace to you" was His own greeting when He returned victorious from the grave. "He is our peace" (Eph. ii. 14), and this peace is the farewell gift to the disciples from whom He is now departing. (Comp. chaps. xiv. 27; xvi. 33; xx. 19, 21, 26.)

**Not as the world giveth, give I unto you.**—The contrast is not between the emptiness of the world's salutations and the reality of His own gift, but between His legacy to them and the legacies ordinarily left by the world. He gives them not land or houses or possessions, but "peace;" and that "His own peace," "the peace of God which passeth all understanding."

unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (28) Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come *again* unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. (29) And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

(30) Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me. (31) But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

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**Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.**—These are in part the words of the first verse, and are now repeated as a joyous note of triumph. Possessing the peace which He gives them, having another Advocate in the person of the Holy Spirit, having the Father and the Son ever abiding in them, there cannot be, even when He is about to leave them, room for trouble or for fear.

The word here rendered "be afraid" occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It points especially to the cowardice of fear. The cognate substantive is used in 2 Tim. i. 7, and the adjective in Matt. viii. 26; Mark iv. 40; and Rev. xxi. 8.

(28) **Ye have heard how I said unto you.**—Better, *Ye heard how I said unto you.* (See verses 19 and 20.)

**If ye loved me, ye would rejoice.**—True love seeks another's good and not its own. Their sorrow at His departure was at its root selfish, as all sorrow for those who depart to be with God is, however little we think so. His departure would be the return to the glory of the Father's throne, and was matter for joy and not for sorrow. For them also it was expedient. (Comp. Notes on chap. xvi. 6, 7.)

**For my Father is greater than I.**—These words have naturally formed the subject of controversy in every period of the Church's history, between those who deny and those who accept the truth that the Son is "very God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before all worlds." And, as in all controversies, statements have been made on either side which cannot be supported by the words themselves. On the part of those who assert the divine nature, it has been contended that the Father is greater than the Son only as regards the human nature of the Son; but this is not here thought of. In this passage, as in others of the New Testament, it is plainly asserted that in the divine nature there is a subordination of the Son to the Father. (See, *e.g.*, verse 16; chap. xvii. 5; 1 Cor. iii. 23; xi. 3; xv. 27, 28; Phil. ii. 9, 11; and especially Note on chap. v. 19 *et seq.*) On the part of those who deny the divinity of our Lord, it has been contended that this text asserts the inferiority of His nature to that of the Father, whereas the words could only have been uttered by one who meant in them to assert His own divine essence. If we try to imagine a man saying, "God is greater than I," we feel at once that He who really said them claimed for Himself that He was truly God.

(29) **And now I have told you before it come to pass.**—Comp. chap. xiii. 19. Here, again, He tells them the event before the accomplishment, that it may serve to strengthen their faith. Two interpretations of this verse are possible. (1) That He told them of the coming of the Advocate to teach all truth, and bring all things to their remembrance, in order that in the fulfilment of this they may, with increase of faith, believe in Him. (2) That He told them of His going to the Father, in order that when the hour of departure came they may believe that He had gone to the Father. Upon the whole, and especially considering the close parallel with chap. xiii. 29, the first seems the more probable meaning.

(30) **Hereafter I will not talk much with you.**—Better, *I will no more*, or, *I will not continue to talk much with you.* The discourse is broken by the thought that the hour of the conflict is at hand, and that He must go forth to meet it.

**For the prince of this world cometh.**—Better, *is coming.* The approach is thought of as then taking place. For the phrase, "prince of this world," comp. Note on chap. xii. 81. The prince of evil is here regarded as working in and by Judas, who is carrying out his plans and doing his work. (Comp. Notes on chaps. vi. 70 and xiii. 2, 27.)

**And hath nothing in me.**—The words are to be taken in their full and absolute meaning, and they assert that the prince of this world possesses nothing in the person of Christ. In Him he has never for a moment ruled. For this appeal to perfect sinlessness, comp. Note on chap. viii. 29. It follows from this that His surrender of Himself is entirely voluntary. (Comp. Note on chap. x. 18.)

(31) The most probable arrangement of this verse is to omit the period after "so I do," and to consider all down to this point as governed by "that." We shall read then, "But, that the world may know that I love the Father, and that as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do, arise, let us go hence." He has asserted, in the previous verse, the sinlessness which makes His act wholly self-determined. He now expresses the subordination of His own to the Father's will, and summons the Apostles to rise up with Him from the table, and go forth from the room.

**But that the world . . .**—The words seem to point back to "the prince of this world" who has just been mentioned. The prince cometh, but it is to a defeat; and the very world over which he has ruled will see in the self-sacrifice of Jesus the love of the Father. That love will reclaim them from the bondage of the oppressor and restore them to the freedom of children.

It is an interesting question which we cannot hope with certainty to solve, whether or not in obedience to the command they went from the room at once. In other words, were the discourse of chaps. xv. and xvi., and the prayer of chap. xvii., uttered in the room after the summons to depart, or on the way to the garden of Gethsemane? The immediate connection of the opening words of the next chapter with the present verse naturally leads to the opinion that they were spoken in the same place, and, in the absence of any hint of a change, it is safe not to assume any. The words of chap. xviii. 1 are probably those which express the act to which the words our Lord has just spoken summon them. But comp. *Chronological Harmony of the Gospels*, p. xxxv.

CHAPTER XV.—(1) I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. (2) Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away:[a] and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. (3) Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.[b] (4) Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. (5) I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same

A.D. 33.

b ch. 13. 10.

a Matt. 15. 13.

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## XV.

[(2) THE LAST WORDS OF DEEPEST MEANING TO THE FAITHFUL FEW (*continued*).

(*e*) *Relation of Jesus and His disciples to each other; and to the world* (chap. xv. 1—27).
  (*α*) Their union with Him. The True Vine: union from within (verses 1—11)—comp. the Good Shepherd (chap. x.); union from without.
  (*β*) Their union with each other (verses 12—17).
  (*γ*) The hatred of the world (verses 18—24):
    The reason of it (verses 18—21);
    The sinfulness of it (verses 22—25).
  (*δ*) The witness to the world (verses 26, 27):
    By the Paraclete (verse 26);
    By the disciples (verse 27).]

(1) **I am the true vine.**—For the word "true," comp. Note on chap. i. 9. The ideal truth, of which the natural vine is a figure, is fulfilled in Him. The thought is introduced suddenly, and with nothing in the context to lead up to it. The natural explanation of this is, that here, as in other instances, it was suggested by some external object which met the eye. If we suppose (comp. Note on xiv. 31) that they were crossing the valley on the way to Gethsemane, there is reason for the idea that they passed a vineyard, that supplied the form in which our Lord's thoughts are expressed; but the journey itself, during the discourse, is improbable; and the sight of a vineyard is the less likely, as it was night. On the supposition that they were still in the room where they had eaten supper, a vine whose tendrils grew into the room, or the vine carved on the doors of the Temple (Jos. *Wars*, v. 5, § 4; *Ant.* xv. 11, § 3), or the vineyards seen in the distance by moonlight, or the vine suggested by "the fruit of the vine" of which they had drunk, have been suggested. Of these the last has most probability, as pound up with the significance of the cup of which they had drunk that night. We cannot say more than this. The imagery may have followed from some incident, or custom, or remark, now wholly unknown to us. It was, as in the case of the Good Shepherd, familiar to them from the Old Testament, and would have come to their minds from any slight suggestion. (See, *e.g.*, the following passages: Ps. lxxx. 8—19; Isa. v. 1 *et seq.*; Jer. ii. 21; Ezek. xix. 10.) It seems to have been expressed also in Rabbinic precepts, *e.g.*, "Whosoever dreameth of a vine-branch shall see the Messiah." (*Berachoth*, fol. 89.)

**And my Father is the husbandman.**—Comp. Matt. xxi. 33 *et seq.*; Mark xii. 1 *et seq.*; Luke xx. 9 *et seq.* The thought here is of the owner of the vine, who himself cultivates and trains it.

(2) **Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away.**—The two chief duties of the vine-dresser, cutting off all fruitless tendrils, and cleansing those that bear fruit, supply illustrations of the training of human souls by the Divine Husbandman. We are not to interpret these words, as they frequently have been interpreted, of the unbelieving world, or of the Jews; but of Christians in name, who claim to be branches of the true vine. These the Husbandman watcheth day by day; He knoweth them, and readeth the inner realities of their lives, and every one that is fruitless He taketh away.

**And every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it.**—Better, *he cleanseth it.* (Comp. Heb. i. 3.) This means in the natural vine the cutting off of shoots which run to waste, and the removal of every excrescence which hinders the growth of the branch. It means in the spiritual training the checking of natural impulses and affections, and the removal of everything, even though it be by a pang sharp as the edge of the pruner's knife, which can misdirect or weaken the energy of the spiritual life, and thus diminish its fruitfulness. A vine which has been pruned—here a tendril cut off, and there one bent back—here a shoot that seemed of fairest promise to the unskilled eye unsparingly severed by the vine-dresser, who sees it is worthless—here a branch, in itself good, made to yield its place to one that is better, and itself trained to fill another place—such is the familiar picture of the natural vine—such, also, to a wisdom higher than ours, is the picture of human life.

(3) **Now ye are clean.**—Better, *Already are ye clean.* The pronoun is emphatic. "Already are ye, as distinct from others who will become clean in the future." (Comp. Note on chap. xiii. 10.)

**Through the word which I have spoken unto you.**—Better, *on account of the word which I have spoken unto you.* The word was the revelation of God to them, and by reason of its moral power they had been cleansed. We are not to limit the reference to chap. xiii. 10, but are to understand it of our Lord's whole teaching. (See chaps. v. 24; viii. 31, 32; xii. 48; xvii. 10; and comp. Note on Eph. v. 26.)

(4) **Abide in me, and I in you.**—The clauses are here connected as cause and effect. The second is the promise, which will not fail if the command of the first be observed. The union then, and all that follows from it, is placed within the power of the human will. All is contained in the words, "Abide in Me." He who obeys this command has Christ abiding in him, and is a fruitful branch of the true vine.

**As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself.**—The branch regarded of itself, apart from ("except it abide in") the vine, has no original source of life. The sap flows from the vine to branch and tendril and leaf and fruit. The branch of itself is a lifeless organ, and only fulfils its functions when it is connected with the vine. So in the spiritual life, men apart from Christ have no original source of life and fruitfulness. The true life flows from Him to every branch that abides in Him, quickening by its power the whole man, and making him fruitful in good. The man who lives without faith in God may be said to exist, rather than to live, and misses the true aim of his being.

(5) **I am the vine, ye are the branches.**—The

bringeth forth much fruit: for without[1] me ye can do nothing. (6) If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned. (7) If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. (8) Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. (9) As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. (10) If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

[1] Or, *severed from me.*

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first clause is repeated to bring out the contrast with the second. It has been implied, but not directly stated, that they are the branches. It may be that there was a pause after the end of the fourth verse, accompanied by a look at the disciples, or at that which suggested the imagery of the vine. His words would then continue with the sense, "Yes, it is so. That is the true relation between us. I am the vine, ye are the branches. The fruitful branches represent men that abide in Me . . ."

**For without me ye can do nothing.**—Better, *separate from Me*, or, *apart from Me.* (Comp. margin.) The words bring out the fulness of the meaning of the fruitfulness of the man who abides in Christ. It is he, and he only, who brings forth fruit, for the man who is separate from Christ can bear no fruit. The words have often been unduly pressed, to exclude all moral power apart from Christ, whereas the whole context limits them to the fruit-bearing of the Christian life. The persons thought of all through this allegory are true and false Christians, and nothing is said of the influence on men of the wider teaching of God, the Light of the Logos ever in the world. A moral power outside the limits of Christianity is clearly recognised in the New Testament. (Comp., *e.g.*, Rom. ii. 14, 15, Notes.)

(6) **If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch . . .**—The thought passes from the fruitful to the sterile branch, from the man who abideth to the man who will not abide in Christ. In the natural vineyard such a branch was cast forth, and then withered, and was gathered with others into bundles, and burned. The vivid picture illustrates the fearful history of a man who willeth not to abide in Christ.

**And they are burned.**—Better, *and they burn.* The tenses of this verse should be carefully observed. The burning of the withered branches of the natural vine suggests the final judgment, and the whole is thought of from that time. Hence the earlier verbs are in the past, and the later in the present tense.

(7) **If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you . . .**—He is now passing from the figure, which recurs again only in verses 8 and 16. We should have expected here, "and I abide in you" (verse 4); but His abiding in them necessarily accompanies their abiding in Him. The abiding of His words in them is the means by which, and the proof that they do abide in Him. (Comp. chap. xiv. 15, 23, 24.)

**Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.**—The reading is not certain, but the first verb should probably be imperative, "Ask what ye will . . ." The promise in all its width is the same as that in chap. xiv. 13, 14 (see Note there), and it is attended by the same condition, for they who abide in Christ, and in whom Christ's words abide, cannot pray otherwise than in His name.

(8) **Herein is my Father glorified.**—This clause is generally understood of the words which follow as it is taken in our English version, but the rendering is liable to the objection that it gives a forced meaning to the word "that" (ἵνα), which is properly used to express purpose. We may here (as in chaps. iv. 37 and xvi. 30) take "herein" to refer to the words which have gone before. By so doing we give a natural meaning to the words, and get a satisfactory sense for the sentence. The thought then will be, "In this doing whatever ye ask, my Father is glorified, in order that ye may bear much fruit, and that ye may become my disciples."

**So shall ye be my disciples.**—Better, *and may become My disciples.* The pronoun is strongly emphatic. The living union with Christ, which made all their prayers, prayers in His name, and prayers which He would answer, and made them abound with fruit to the glory of God, was the characteristic which marked them as His true disciples.

(9) **As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.**—Better, *As the Father hath loved Me, I have also loved you.* He had passed from the thought of their discipleship to the foundation of their union with Him and with God. It was in the eternal love of the Father, ever going forth to the Son, and from the Son ever going forth to all who would receive it. The Father's love and presence was ever with the Son, because the Son ever did those things which were pleasing to Him. (Comp. Note on chap. viii. 31.) The love of the Son is ever present wherever willing heart of obedient disciple is open to its power.

**Continue ye in my love.**—Better, *abide ye in My love.* The word "continue" misses the connection with the context. By "My love" is meant, not "love to Me in your hearts," but, "My love towards you." The one produces the other. "We love Him because He hath first loved us;" but that which is prominent in the thought here is His love to the disciples, which He has just compared to the Father's love to Himself.

(10) **If ye keep my commandents, ye shall abide in my love.**—Comp. chap. xiv. 21, 24. The keeping of His commandments is the outward proof of love towards Him; so that the love of the human heart towards Christ, which itself flows from Christ's love to us (see Note on previous verse), becomes the condition of abiding in that love. While we cherish love for Him, our hearts are abiding in that state which can receive His love for us.

**Even as I have kept my Father's commandments . . .**—Comp. Note on verse 9 and reference there. This is again an appeal to His perfect sinlessness, and willing subordination as Son to the Father. We should notice also that the keeping of the commandments is not an arbitrary condition imposed upon human love, but a necessary result of love itself, and therefore as true in the relation of the Son to the Father as it is in our relation to Him. Because the Son loved the Father, therefore He kept His commandments, and in this love He abode in the Father's love. Because we love God we necessarily keep His commandments, and in this love is the receptive power which constitutes abiding in the divine love.

(11) These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full. (12) This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.[a] (13) Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. (14) Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. (15) Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. (16) Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you,[b] that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that whatsoever

[a] ch. 13. 34; 1 Thess. 4. 9; 1 John 3. 11.

[b] Matt. 28. 19.

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(11) **These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you.**—The better reading is, . . *that My joy may be in you.* The joy thought of is that which Christ Himself possessed in the consciousness of His love towards the Father, and of the Father's love towards Him. The brightness of that joy lit up the darkest hours of His own human life, and He wills that it should light up theirs. In the consciousness of their love to God, and of God's love to them, there would be in them, as part of their true life, joy which no sorrow could ever overcome. They were as men with troubled hearts. He has told them of the true source of peace. His own peace He has given to them. He tells them now of the source of joy, and has spoken the word that they may possess the very joy which was the light of His own heart.

**And that your joy might be full.**—Comp. the words of the Intercessory Prayer in chap. xvii. 13, and the same phrase in chap. iii. 29; xvi. 24; 1 John i. 4; 2 John, verse 12. The state of which He has spoken to them—the loving and being loved of God—is the ideal perfection of human life. It supplies satisfaction for all the deepest desires of our being. The capacities of the whole man are fulfilled in it, and the result is fulness of joy. They have learnt little of the true spirit of Christianity whose religion does not impart to them a joy which sheds its light over the whole of their lives.

(12) **This is my commandment.**—Comp. Note on chap. xiii. 34. In verse 10 keeping of His commandments was laid down as the means of abiding in His love. He now reminds them that that which was specially the commandment to them was love to one another. Love to God is proved by love to mankind. The two great commandments of the law are really one. "If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

(13) **Greater love hath no man than this.**—Better, . . . *hath no one than this.* (Comp. Note on chap. x. 18, 29.) Nothing greater is conceivable in the thought of love. He has spoken of His own love for them as the measure of their love for each other. The thought of this verse dwells upon what His love really was and what theirs should also be. (Comp. especially Note on 1 John iii. 16.)

**That a man lay down his life for his friends.**—Better, *that any one* . . . For the phrase "lay down his life," comp. chap. x. 11. The term "friends" is here used because those whom He is addressing were His friends. There is no opposition between this passage and Rom. v. 6 *et seq.* The point dwelt upon is the greatness of the love, and the highest reach of love is the self-sacrifice which spares not life itself.

(14) **Ye are my friends . . .**—Stress is to be laid upon the pronoun, "*Ye* are My friends . . ." "Ye are those of whom I have just spoken, and for whom I am about to give the greatest proof of love."

**If ye do whatsoever I command you.**—Better, *the things which I am commanding you.* (Comp. chap. xiv. 21, 23.)

(15) **Henceforth I call you not servants.**—Better, *I call you no longer*, or, *I do not still call you, servants.* (Comp. chap. xiv. 30.) For the word "servant," as applied to them, comp. chaps. xii. 26; xiii. 13. It is used again in this discourse (verse 20), but with reference to an earlier saying. In chap. xx. 17, he calls them brethren. The word here rendered "servant" means literally "bond-servant," "slave." He will not apply this to them, but the foremost Apostles felt that His service was perfect freedom, and it became the common title which they applied to themselves. (Comp., *e.g.*, Rom. i. 1; Jas. i. 1; 2 Pet. i. 1; Rev. i. 1.)

**For the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth.**—The part of the slave is mechanical obedience, without any principle of love between his master and himself. He knows nothing of the purpose or aim of his master, and although he sees the deeds which are done, he knows not what his master doeth. There is no occasion to read the word "doeth" as though it were "will do" (future), which has not unfrequently been accepted as the explanation.

**For all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you**—*i.e.*, He had treated them as friends and sharers in their common work. He has revealed to them the character and attributes of the Father, and kept back from them no truth of which they could understand the meaning. There is no contradiction with chap. xvi. 12. The reason He had not told them more was not on His part, but on theirs. They could not then receive more, but in the future He would by the Holy Spirit declare to them all truth.

(16) **Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.**—Comp. Luke vi. 12 *et seq.*, and in this Gospel chaps. vi. 70, and xiii. 18. The thought of His love for them, which had exalted them from the position of slaves to friends, from fishermen to Apostles, is made to remind them again (verse 17) of the duty of love to each other. In verse 20 he reminds them of the words which accompanied His own act of humility in washing their feet (chap. xiii. 15, 16). The chiefest Apostle owed all to His gift and election, and should be ready to sacrifice all for his brethren, as He Himself was.

**And ordained you.**—The word "ordained" has acquired a special sense in modern English which is here misleading, and it will be better, therefore, to read *appointed.*

**That ye should go and bring forth fruit.**—Comp. Matt. xiii. 44; xviii. 15; xix. 21, for the idea of going away and doing something. It implies here the activity of the Apostles as distinct from that of Christ. Each one as a branch ever joined to Christ was to grow away from Him in the development of his own work, and was to bring forth his own fruit. The margin compares Matt. xxviii. 19, probably, with the ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. (17) These things I command you, that ye love one another. (18) If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before *it hated* you. (19) If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. (20) Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord.[a] If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep your's also. (21) But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. (22) If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke[1] for their sin. (23) He that hateth me hateth my Father also. (24) If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin:

[1] Or, *excuse.*

[a] Matt. 10. 24; ch. 13. 16.

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thought of their fulfilling the Apostle's missionary work. This view has been commonly adopted, but it gives to the word "go" a fulness of meaning which is scarcely warranted.

**And that your fruit should remain.**—Comp. Note on chap. iv. 36; and see 2 John verse 8, and Rev. xiv. 13.

**That whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father.**—Comp. Notes on verses 7 and 8.

(17) **These things I command you**—*i.e.*, the things of which He has spoken from verse 1 onwards, and especially from verses 12—16. After speaking them He comes back to the purpose from which this section started, "that ye love one another."

We must beware of the not unfrequent mistake of interpreting "these things" of the words which follow, as if it were, "I command you this, viz., to love one another." The thought is, "I am giving you these precepts that you may love one another."

(18) **If the world hate you.**—He has spoken of their close union with Himself, and of their love to each other. He proceeds in the remainder of the chapter to speak of their relation to the world. There is a striking contrast between the "love" in the last verse, and the "hatred" in this. There was the more need for them to be close bound to each other, and to their Lord, on account of the hatred which awaited them in the world.

**Ye know that it hated me before it hated you.**—It is better to take the first word as an imperative, "Know that it hated . . ." The very hatred, then, is a bond of union with their Master, and this thought should supply strength to meet it, and joy even when suffering from it (verse 11). (Comp. 1 Pet. iv. 12, 13.)

(19) **If ye were of the world, the world would love his own.**—The force of the expression indicates the utter selfishness of the world's love. It would love not them, but that in them which was its own. (Comp. Note on chap. vii. 7.)

**I have chosen you out of the world.**—Comp. verse 16, and Note on chap. vii. 7. There He had told them that the world could not hate them. The very fact of its hatred would prove a moral change in them, by which they had ceased to belong to the world, and had become the children of God. Both thoughts are repeated in 1 John iii. 13, and iv. 5.

(20) **Remember the word that I said unto you.**—Comp. chap. xiii. 16, where the saying is used in a different sense; and Matt. x. 24, where it is used in the same connection in which we find it here.

**If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying . .** —The meaning is exactly that which is expressed in the rendering of the English version. The two things are necessarily united, as Christ and His disciples are united. His word is their word. The relation of the world to the one would be that which it had been to the other.

(21) **But all these things will they do unto you.**—These words are themselves an interpretation of the previous verse. They suppose the persecution and hatred to take place, and find the true consolation in the fact that this would be done to them as representing their Lord. The Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles are a commentary on this text. (Comp., among numerous passages, Acts iv. 17; ix. 14; Gal. iii. 17.)

**Because they know not him that sent me.**—The hatred is here traced to its true cause, which is ignorance of God. The Apostles were those sent by Christ. He Himself was the Apostle of the Father. They would hate His messenger, and hate Him, the messenger of God, because they knew not God.

(22) **If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin.**—In this and the following verses (22—25) our Lord shows the sinfulness of the world's hatred, because it was in the face of His revelation to them by both word (verse 22) and work (verse 24). Apart from this revelation, their sin would have belonged to the times of ignorance, which God overlooked (Acts xvii. 30, 31). It would have been the negative evil of men who know not. It was now the positive evil of men who, knowing the truth, wilfully reject it.

**But now they have no cloke for their sin.**—Better, as in the margin, *they have no excuse for their sin.* The Greek phrase occurs only here in the New Testament. The word "cloke" as used with sin is familiar to us from the exhortation in the Book of Common Prayer. The idea is rather to cover up, to hide as with a garment, so that they may not be seen; whereas here the idea is of excuse for manifest sin.

(23) **He that hateth me hateth my Father also.**—Comp. Note on chap. v. 23, and verse 18 in this context. Again the darkness of the world's hatred is drawn in the successive degrees of sin. Hatred against the disciples is hatred against the Master whom they represent. Hatred against the Son is hatred against the Father whom He represents. Hatred of the Father! There can be no greater darkness. The sinfulness of sin has in this thought reached its limit. God is love. The heart that can hate love has hardened itself, and cannot be loved.

(24) **If I had not done among them the works.**—Comp. Note on verse 22, and for the evidence of our Lord's works, see chaps. v. 36; ix. 3, 4, 24; x. 21, 37; xiv. 10. They met the evidence of works by the assertion that He was a sinner, and possessed a

but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. (25) But *this cometh to pass*, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.[a] (26) But when the Comforter is come,[b] whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: (27) and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

A.D. 33.

[a] Ps. 35. 19.
[b] Luke 24. 49. ch. 14. 26.

CHAPTER XVI.—(1) These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. (2) They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will

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devil. Their hatred led them to ascribe the highest good to the power of evil. To such hearts there are no channels by which goodness can approach. (Comp. especially Notes on Matt. xii. 31, 32.)

(25) **But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled . . .**—The words in italics are not found in the original, but they rightly complete the sense. For the phrase, "might be fulfilled," comp. Notes on chaps. xii. 38 and xiii. 18.

**That is written in their law.**—Comp. Note on chap. x. 34.

**They hated me without a cause.**—The passage immediately referred to is probably that of the Messianic Psalm (lxix. 4). The words are found also in Pss. xxxv. 19 (see marg. ref.), and less distinctly in Pss. cix. 3, and cxix. 161. (Comp. especially Note on the quotation from this same Psalm in chap. ii. 17.)

The words, "without a cause," rightly express the meaning of the Hebrew word in the Psalm. The Greek follows the LXX., which expresses the thought "to no purpose," or "in vain." This is, however, not the idea of the context here. They had no reason for their sin, and therefore they hated Him without a cause. True were these words of many an earlier sufferer; but they were in their fulness true, they were "fulfilled," only in the one sinless Sufferer.

(26) **But when the Comforter is come.**—Better, *But when the Advocate is come.* (Comp. *Excursus G.*)

**Whom I will send unto you from the Father.**—Comp. chap. xiv. 16, and Note on verse 26. The pronoun is here emphatic. "Whom *I* will send . . ." The mission by the Father in answer to the Son's prayer, and the mission by the Father in the Son's name, and the mission by the Son Himself, are thought of as one and the same thing.

**Even the Spirit of truth.**—Comp. Note on chap. xiv. 17.

**Which proceedeth from the Father.**—The force of these words is to give weight to the witness which the Spirit shall bear of the Son. He is the Advocate whom the Son will send from the Father, but He is also and emphatically the Spirit of Truth proceeding from the Father, and His witness therefore will be that of the Father Himself. These two clauses ("whom I will send unto you from the Father," "which proceedeth from the Father") are to be regarded as parallels; and both of them probably refer to the *office* of the Holy Spirit. The Vulgate renders the verb in the latter clause by the word "procedit," and the older expositors generally understood it of the *person* of the Holy Ghost. The Eastern Church, from the days of Theodore of Mopsuestia downwards, have claimed this text as proving the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father only, and have quoted it as decisive against the addition of the "filioque clause" in the Nicene Creed. The Western Church, comparing it with chap. xvi. 15, and such texts as Rom. viii. 9; Gal. iv. 6; Phil. i. 9; 1 Pet. i. 11, have held that it includes the procession from the Son. If it refers to the person of the Holy Spirit, it must be granted that the *ipsissima verba* of our Lord are in favour of the interpretation of the Greek Church; but if it refers, as with much greater probability it does, to the office of the Holy Ghost, then *these* words have no bearing upon the doctrinal question at issue. The student should read on this subject, Pearson *On the Creed*, Art. viii., more particularly his invaluable collection of notes.

**He shall testify of me.**—Better, *shall bear witness of Me.* (Comp. Notes on chap. i. 7 and 1 John v. 6).

(27) **And ye also shall bear witness.**—The tense is present, *and ye also bear witness;* or, *and ye also are witnesses.* (Comp. Notes on Luke xxiv. 48, 49.) The Apostles themselves distinguished between their own witness of things which had come within their own experience and the witness borne by the power of the Holy Spirit, of which the Day of Pentecost was the first great instance. (Comp. Acts v. 32.)

**Because ye have been with me from the beginning.**—Comp. chap. i. 7; and Notes on Acts i. 21, 22. The "beginning" of course means the beginning of the Messianic teaching and works of which they were to be witnesses.

## XVI.

[(2) THE LAST WORDS OF DEEPEST MEANING TO THE FAITHFUL FEW (*continued*).

(*f*) *Their relation to the world and the promise of the Paraclete explained more fully* (chap. xvi. 1—33).

- (α) Though the world will hate them, it is still expedient that He should depart from them (verses 1—7).
- (β) The coming of the Paraclete and His office (verses 8—15);
- (γ) His own departure and return. Their sorrow the birth-pangs of joy (verses 16—24);
- (δ) He promises a full revelation of the Father (verses 25—28).
- (ε) Their faith is now weak, though they think it strong (verses 29—32); their future shall be one of tribulation, but He has overcome the world (verse 33).]

(1) **These things have I spoken unto you.**—Comp. Note on chap. xv. 17. Here, too, the reference is to the things which he had just said (verses 17—27). He had foretold them of the hatred of the world and also of the witness of the Spirit.

**That ye should not be offended.**—Comp. Matt. xi. 6; xiii. 21; xxiv. 10, *et al.* In St. John the word occurs only here and in chap. vi. 61.

(2) **They shall put you out of the synagogues.**—Comp. Notes on chaps. ix. 22, xii. 42.

**Will think that he doeth God service.**—Better, *will think that he offereth to God a sacrificial* think that he doeth God service. (3) And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. (4) But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you. (5) But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? (6) But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. (7) Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

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*service.* The word rendered "doeth" in the Authorised version, is the technical word for offering sacrifice. (Comp., *e.g.*, Notes on Matt. v. 23 and viii. 4.) The word rendered "service" means the service of worship. This will be seen by a comparison of the other instances where it occurs in the New Testament—they are Rom. ix. 4, and xii. 1, and Heb. ix. 1, 6. A Rabbinic comment on Num. xxv. 13, is, "Whosoever sheddeth the blood of the wicked is as he who offereth sacrifice." The martyrdom of Stephen, or St. Paul's account of himself as a persecutor (Acts xxvi. 9; Gal. i. 13, 14), shows how these words were fulfilled in the first years of the Church's history, and such accounts are not absent from that history's latest page.

(3) **Because they have not known the Father, nor me.**—Comp. Note on chap. xv. 21. He repeats that ignorance of God is the cause of the world's hatred and persecution, and adds here that it is ignorance of God revealed in Himself. There is a special force in the mention of this ignorance in connection with the previous verse. Men think that in exclusion, and anathemas, and persecutions, and deaths of men made like themselves in the image of God, they are offering to God an acceptable sacrifice. They can know nothing of the true nature of the living Father who pitieth every child, and willeth not the death of a sinner, and gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. They know nothing of the long-suffering and compassion of the Son of Man, who pleaded even for His murderers, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

(4) **But these things have I told you . . .**—He recurs to the thought of verse 1. (Comp. also chaps. xiii. 19 and xiv. 29.) He strengthens them by forewarning them. When the persecution comes they will remember His word, and find in it support for their faith and evidence of His presence with them.

**These things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.**—While with them, He would spare them, and it was against Himself that the hatred of His foes was directed. When He shall have left them they will represent Him, and must stand in the foreground of the battle.

These words seem to be opposed to Matt. x. and parallel passages, where our Lord did tell the Apostles at the time of their call of the persecutions which awaited them. (See especially verses 17, 21, 28.) The passages are not, however, really inconsistent, for "these things" in this verse (comp. verses 3 and 1, and chap. xv. 21) refers to the full account He has given them of the world's hatred and the principles lying at the foot of it, and the manner in which it was to be met by the Spirit's witness and their witness of Him. These things which the infant Church would have to meet, and meet without His bodily presence, He told them not at the beginning.

(5) **But now I go my way to him that sent me.**—(Comp. chaps. xiii. 1 and xiv. 12.) The work of His apostleship on earth was drawing to its close, and He was about to return to the Father from whom He had received it. This was to Him matter of joy, and if they had really loved Him would have been so to them. They would have thought of the future before Him, as He was then thinking, in the fulness of His love, of the future before them.

**And none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?**—Peter had asked this very question (chap. xiii. 36), and Thomas had implied it (chap. xiv. 5), but what the words here mean is, "None of you are out of love for Me asking about the place whither I am going. Your thoughts are not with Me. It is to you as nothing that I am returning to Him that sent Me."

(6) **Sorrow hath filled your heart.**—The thought of their own separation from Him, and of the dark future which lay before them, so filled their hearts that it left room for no thoughts of Him, and the brightness of the glory to which He was returning.

(7) **Nevertheless I tell you the truth.**—The words He is about to utter are words of strange sound for the ears of disciples, and He prefaces them by an appeal to His own knowledge and candour in dealing with them, as in chap. xiv. 2. The pronoun bears the weight of the emphasis, "I, who know all."

**It is expedient for you that I go away.**—"There is no cause," He would say, "for the deep sorrow which has filled your hearts. It is for your advantage that *I*, as distinct from the Paraclete, who is to come, should go away" (chap. xiv. 16). Yes; for those who had left all to follow Him; for those who had none to go to but Himself (chap. vi. 68); for those whose hopes were all centred in Him, it was—hard and incomprehensible as the saying must have seemed—an advantage that He should go away.

**For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you.**—Better, . . . *the Advocate will not come unto you.* (Comp. *Excursus G.*) For the connection between the departure of Christ and the coming of the Advocate, comp. Notes on chap. vii. 39, and Acts ii. 33. We may not fathom the deep counsels of God in which the reason of these words is to be found; but the order fixed in these counsels was that the Son of Man should complete His work on earth, and offer the sacrifice of Himself for sin, and rise from the dead, and ascend to the Father's throne, before the Advocate should come. The Son of Man was to be glorified before the Spirit was to be given. Humanity was to ascend to heaven before the Spirit could be sent to humanity on earth. The revelation of saving truth was to be complete before inspiration was to breathe it as the breath of life into man's soul. The conviction of sin, righteousness, and judgment could only follow the finished work of Christ.

**But if I depart, I will send him unto you.**—Our translators have sought to show the distinction between the words used in the earlier clauses, "I go away," and that used here, "I depart"; but probably few English readers will have observed it. The former

(8) And when he is come, he will reprove[1] the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: (9) of sin, because they believe not on me; (10) of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; (11) of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

(12) I have yet many things to say unto

[1] Or, *convince.*

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word means, "I go away from you," the latter, "I go away to the Father." For the thought of this clause, comp. Note on chaps. xiv. 16 and xv. 25.

(8) **And when he is come, he will reprove the world.**—Better, as in margin, *convince the world.* (Comp. chaps. iii. 20 and viii. 46.) The only other passages where it occurs in the Gospels are in Matt. xviii. 15, and Luke iii. 19. It is not in the better reading of John viii. 9; but it occurs not unfrequently in the Epistles. (See especially Note on 1 Cor. xiv. 24.) This conviction of the world is by witness concerning Christ (chap. xv. 26). It is the revelation to the hearts of men of the character and work of Christ, and, therefore, a refutation of the evil in their hearts. The result of this conviction is two-fold, according as men embrace it, accept its chastening discipline, and are saved by it; or reject it, and in the rejection harden their hearts, and are thus condemned by it. (Comp. 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.) The effect of St. Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost is the first great historical comment on this verse; but the comment is continued in the whole history of the Church's work. The remainder of the verse enumerates the three steps in this conviction, which are more fully defined in the three following verses.

(9) **Of sin, because they believe not on me.**—This should not be interpreted, as it very frequently is, of the sin of unbelief, but of sin generally; unbelief in Christ is stated as the cause of sin. Sin is missing the aim of life, the disordered action of powers that have lost their controlling principle. Christ is the revelation to the world of the Father's love. In union with God through Him the soul finds the centre of its being, and the true purpose of its life. By the witness of Christ the Holy Spirit convinces men that He is the centre of the moral harmony of the Universe, and that through Him their spirits have access to God. This conviction reveals to them their sin, because they believe not on Him. Its effect is salutary or condemnatory, according as we are convinced and converted by it, or refuse its influence and remain convicted.

(10) **Of righteousness, because I go to my Father.**—In the conviction of sin, the world is convinced of its own sin by the Spirit's representation of Christ to it. That representation of Christ brings also the conviction of righteousness, but this is the righteousness of Christ, not that of the world. The conviction of Christ's righteousness necessarily precedes that of the heart's own sin. The light makes the darkness visible, and the revelation of the darkness shows the clearness of the light. The special reason of the conviction of righteousness is the resurrection and ascension of our Lord. Men had called Him a sinner (chap. ix. 24), and His crucifixion was the world's assertion that He was a malefactor (chap. xviii. 30); but even when He was hanging upon the cross there came to the centurion's mind the conviction, "Truly this Man was innocent" (see Luke xxiii. 47); and moreover His return to the Father was Heaven's witness to His righteousness. For the way in which this conviction was brought home to the hearts of the Apostles, and through them to the hearts of mankind, comp. especially Acts ii. 27, 31, 36, 37. See also Acts iii. 14; vii. 52; 1 Pet. iii. 18; 1 John ii. 1, 29; iii. 7.

**And ye see me no more.**—The word means, "look upon," "behold." The going to the Father would cause that they should gaze upon His bodily presence no more; but the Spirit's witness of Him, which would convince the world of sin and righteousness, would be to them a truer presence of their Lord than any which physical eye could see. The eye of the spirit sees the reality; the eye of the body only looks upon the appearance.

(11) **Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.**—Comp. Notes on chaps. iii. 17, 18, and xii. 30, 31. The tense here is perfect, marking the completion of the condemnation. "The prince of this world hath been and remaineth judged." The conviction is regarded from the point of view of the coming of the Advocate when Christ's work shall have been completed. That work is the redemption of the world, and is, therefore, the condemnation of the prince of this world. The conviction of this judgment follows upon that of sin and upon that of righteousness. The two kingdoms stand out in clear distinction. The power of the prince of this world is overcome by the opening of the kingdom of heaven to all believers. The King of Righteousness is in victory seated upon His throne, and claims mankind, whose nature He has assumed and whom He has redeemed, to be free from sin and servants of righteousness.

It is not within the scope of these Notes to discuss the theories of interpretation, and the many difficulties which attend every interpretation of verses 7—11. All that can be attempted is to place the reader in possession of what seems to be the simplest meaning of the words. A more full treatment is the less necessary as a complete discussion of the whole subject is easily accessible in the Sermons of the late Archdeacon of Lewes, preached before the University of Cambridge, in 1840. The Notes attached to the Sermons are an exhaustive summary of the views held in ancient and modern times by men most capable of judging. (See J. C. Hare, *Mission of the Comforter*, Ed. 3, 1876.)

(12) **I have yet many things to say unto you.**—The "many things" are defined by the next verse to be things with regard to which the Spirit of Truth shall be their guide—*i.e.*, they are parts of the revelation which the minds of the disciples are not yet fitted to receive.

**Ye cannot bear them now.**—Comp. chap. xv. 15. The statements are not opposed to each other. On His side there is the readiness to impart to them as friends all things that He had heard from the Father. But revelation can only be made to the mind which can accept it; and for those who have only in part understood what He has told them there are many things which cannot now be borne.

Of what the "many things" were, we have only this general knowledge. They would include, doubtless, the doctrinal system of the early Church, and they would not exclude all the lessons which the spirit of God has taught the Church in every age.

The fact that there were truths which Christ Himself could not teach is a lesson which men who profess to teach in Christ's name have too seldom learnt. St. Paul found in it a rule for his own practice. He, too, fed men with milk because they could not bear meat.

you, but ye cannot bear them now. (13) Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. (14) He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you. (15) All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you. (16) A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go

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(Comp. Note on 1 Cor. iii. 3.) It is true, indeed, that no one can teach who does not possess a higher knowledge than that of his pupil; but it is no less true that no one can really teach who does not take the lower ground of his pupil's knowledge, and from that lead him to his own. Truths which the cultured mind accepts as obvious would appear no less so to the peasant if he were carefully taught them. Too often the weaker brother finds a stumbling-block in the very steps which should lead him to a higher truth, because he approaches them blindly, and without a guide. For the breach which exists between the higher Christian thought of our day and the faith of the masses of the people, Christian teachers are in no small degree responsible, and the only means by which the chasm may be bridged is to teach Christ's truths as He Himself taught them.

(13) **Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come.**—Comp. Note on chap. xiv. 17.

**He will guide you into all truth.**—Better, . . . *into all the truth.* The words do not mean that the Holy Spirit will fully guide them into truth, but that He will be their guide into the fulness of truth. The word rendered "guide," occurs again in Matt. xv. 14; Luke vi. 39; Rev. vii. 17; and metaphorically, as here, in Acts viii. 31. A comparison of these passages will show that its meaning is "to point out the way," "to lead one on his way." The fulness of truth is for the disciples an unknown territory. They are spiritually as blind men, feeling after the truth, but not able to see it. The Spirit of Truth will take them by the hand, and, step by step, as they have strength to follow, will guide them into the territory, and unfold to them the treasures it contains. The promise has a special meaning for the disciples to whom it was spoken; but it holds good for every disciple who seeks to know the truth. We may pray,—without doubt that the prayer is in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and without doubt that it will be answered—

> "Come, Holy Ghost, *our* souls inspire,
> And lighten with celestial fire.
> . . . . . . . . .
> Enable with perpetual light
> The dulness of *our* blinded sight."

The scribes, "instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, and bringing forth out of their treasure things new and old" (Matt. xiii. 52), may know that they can seek, and not seek in vain, a higher than human guidance, and may hope "by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in His holy comfort."

**For he shall not speak of himself.**—Comp. Notes on chaps. v. 19 and vii. 17, 18. The Holy Spirit's power to guide into the truth depends upon the fact that He, like the Son Himself, will represent to the world the eternal truth of God. He, too, is subordinated to the Father, and His work is to seek the glory of Him that sent Him. (Comp., on the other hand, chap. viii. 44, where the essence of the lie is that the devil speaketh of his own.)

**And he will shew you things to come.**—Better, *and He will announce to you the things to come.* (Comp. Notes on Rev. i. 1; xxii. 6, 20.) We must again be on our guard against drawing limits which Christ has not drawn. These words, too, have their fulfilment in the Spirit's illumination in all time; but we may still find their first and special meaning in the Revelation to the Apostolic Church, of which St. John's Apocalypse is the most prominent example.

(14) **He shall glorify me.**—The pronoun is here full of emphasis. The thought is that the future guidance of the Spirit promised in verse 13, will be the revelation of the many things of Christ Himself which they cannot bear now (verse 12).

**For he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.**—Better, as in verse 13, . . . . *announce it unto you.* This is the test of the Spirit, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God." (Comp. Notes on 1 John iv. 1, 2.) The revelation of Christ is not an imperfect revelation which the Holy Spirit is to supplement. It is a full revelation imperfectly received, and His office is to illumine the heart, and bring home to it the things of Christ.

(15) **All things that the Father hath are mine.**—He has told them that the Spirit's work is to glorify Him, to receive of His, and announce to the world. The ground of this saying is in the fact that the Son is the Revealer of the Father, and that the fulness of the truth (verse 13) is given unto Him. The words appear from the context not to express the spiritual relation of the Son to the Father, but the fulness of the communication to Him in His human nature of the divine truth which He should reveal to man. (Comp. Notes on chaps. i. 18; viii. 42; x. 36; xvii. 10; Matt. xi. 27; Col. i. 19; ii. 2, 3.)

**He shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.**—Better, *He taketh of Mine, and shall declare it unto you.* The present expresses the unchanging relation of the Spirit to the Son. It should be noted that in these verses (14 and 15) there is an implication of the following doctrinal truths. They are implied, let us remember, in the words of our Lord Himself, and that they are implied and not stated increases the force of their meaning:—(1) The divinity of the Son: "He shall glorify Me;" "All things that the Father hath are Mine." (2) The personality of the Holy Ghost: "He shall receive of Mine." The Greek word, ἐκεῖνος, expresses this in the most emphatic way. The word is used of the Holy Spirit in verses 8 and 13, and in chaps. xiv. 26 and xv. 26. (3) The Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity: "the Father;" "I;" "He."

(16) **A little while, and ye shall not see me.**—The better reading is, *A little while, and ye no longer behold Me.* For the sense, comp. Notes on chap. xiv. 18, 19. The time here referred to is that between the moment of His speaking to them and His death.

**And again, a little while, and ye shall see me.**—The time here referred to is the interval between His death and the Day of Pentecost. That the vision to the Father. (17) Then said *some* of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father? (18) They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith. (19) Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me? (20) Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. (21) A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. (22) And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. (23) And in that day ye shall ask me nothing.

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is to be understood of our Lord's presence in the person of the Paraclete (chap. xiv. 18, 19), is confirmed by verse 23. Note that in this clause the verb ("see") is different from that in the preceding clause ("behold"). The latter refers rather to the physical, and the former to the spiritual, vision. (Comp. chap. xx. 6—8.)

**Because I go to the Father.**—The majority of the better MSS. omit these words at this place. They have probably been inserted here from the end of the next verse. (Comp. Note there.)

(17, 18) **Then said some of his disciples among themselves.**—Better, *Therefore said* . . . The question arises out of what He has said. They draw aside and discuss the matter privately. It is beyond their comprehension, and seems to be contradictory.

**A little while, and ye shall not see me.**—Better, *A little while, and ye behold Me not,* as in verse 16.

**Because I go to the Father.**—So far they have quoted word for word what He had said in the previous verse. They now connect it with what He had said in verses 7 and 10, and this forms the ground of their surprise. There He had spoken of their beholding Him no more because He goeth to the Father. Here He speaks of a little while, after which they shall not behold Him, and again a little while, after which they shall see Him. They cannot reconcile these things. They cannot tell what He saith.

(19) **Now Jesus knew they were desirous to ask him.**—The purpose of His enigmatic saying (verse 29) has been accomplished. Their attention has been excited, and they have taken the first step towards knowledge. They inquire among themselves, and this spirit of inquiry which He reads in their hearts (comp. chaps. ii. 25, vi. 6) He proceeds to answer. The first part of His answer is concerned with their difficulty about the "little while." In verse 28 He answers their thought about His going to the Father.

(20) **Verily, verily, I say unto you.**—Comp. Note on chap. i. 51.

**That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice.**—Comp. chap. xx. 11, and Luke xxiii. 27. In the original the contrast between the sorrow of the disciples and the joy of the world is rendered the more striking by the order of the words, "Weep and lament shall *ye*, but the world shall rejoice." The tears and the scoffs at the cross were the accomplishment of this prophecy.

**And ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.**—The expression is a full one. It is not simply that they shall pass from sorrow to joy, but that the sorrow itself shall become joy. They will rejoice in the presence of the Lord, when after a little while they will see Him and will feel that the separation necessarily went before the union, and that the sorrow was itself a matter of joy because it was the necessary cause of the joy (verse 7, and chap. xx. 20).

(21) **A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow.**—The Greek is more exactly, *the woman* . . . *hath pangs*—that is, "the woman in the well-known illustration." (See Note on chap. xv. 15.) This figure was of frequent use in the prophets. (Comp. Isa. xxi. 3; xxvi. 17, 18, and especially lxvi. 7, 8; Jer. iv. 31; xxii. 23; xxx. 6; Hos. xiii. 13, 14; Mic. iv. 9, 10.)

**That a man is born into the world.**—The word is the wider word for "human being." (Comp. Note on chap. i. 51.) The thought is of the joy of maternity swallowing up the pangs of child-birth. These cease to exist, but that continues. She forgets the one in the fulness of the other.

For the phrase "into the world" comp. chaps. i. 9 and xviii. 37.

(22) **And ye now therefore have sorrow.**—The same word is used. The hour of their travail-pangs was at hand; but it would pass away, and the fulness of joy would come in the constant presence of their Lord. Their sorrow would be but temporary; their joy would be abiding. The point of comparison between their state, and the familiar illustration of a woman in travail, is the passage from extreme suffering to extreme joy. We are not justified in taking the illustration as a parable, and interpreting it of the death of Christ as the birth-pang of a perfect humanity. This is the general interpretation of the more mystical expositors, and has been unfolded with great truth and beauty; but it is not an exposition of the present text.

**But I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice.**—In verse 19 He had said "Ye shall see." This is the obverse of the same truth. He will again be with them, and see them as they will see Him. The words include too the thought of His deep sympathy with them. He sees them now in the depth of their sorrow, and feels with them in that. He will see them again in the time of their joy, and will rejoice with them in that.

**And your joy no man taketh from you.**—The reading is doubtful. Some of the better MSS. have the future ". . . shall take from you." "No man" is better rendered indefinitely, *no one*, as, *e.g.*, in chap. x. 18 and 29. (Comp. Matt. xxviii. 20, and Rom. viii. 38, 39, and Notes there.)

(23) **And in that day ye shall ask me nothing.**—Comp. Acts i. 6. The time here referred to is, as we have seen (verse 16), the time of the gift of the

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give *it* you.[a] (24) Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. (25) These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs:[1] but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs,[2] but I shall shew you plainly of the Father. (26) At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: (27) for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. (28) I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

[a] Matt. 7. 7.

[1] Or, *parables.*

[2] Or, *parables.*

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Paraclete, who shall fully illumine them, so that they shall not need to ask the meaning of new thoughts and words as they have done hitherto. (Comp., *e.g.*, the certain knowledge of Peter's speech in Acts ii. with the misunderstandings of these last days of the Lord's ministry.)

**Verily, verily, I say unto you.**—Comp. chap. i. 51. As we have so often found, these words precede a truth of weighty import.

**Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.**—The more probable reading is, *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father, He will give it you in My name.* The thought is that the prayer is offered in Christ's name (comp. Note on chap. xiv. 13, and in this context verse 24), and that the answer to every such prayer is in virtue of His name. The fact that we pray in His name makes it certain that the prayer will be answered. The fact that the prayer is answered is proof that it was in Christ's name.

(24) **Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name.**—Comp. Note on chap. xiv. 13. They had not up to this time received the Holy Spirit. When He came, He was as the presence of Christ dwelling in them. Under His influence their will became the will of Christ, and their thoughts the thoughts of Christ, and their prayers the prayers of Christ. They had not yet so learnt Him as to pray in His name. It would be otherwise in that day.

**Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.**—The future is thought of as already present, and they are directed to ask, as though they had already entered into the new region of spiritual life. The pangs of the present travailing are passing away (verse 22). The fulness of joy is already at hand. (Comp. Note on chap. xv. 11.)

(25) **These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs.**—Better, as in the margin, . . . *in parables.* So in the second clause of the verse and in verse 29. (Comp. Note on chap. x. 6.) "These things" refers specially to what He had just said from verse 16 onwards. There is a sense in which it is necessarily true of all Christ's teaching, and of all teaching in words. They are but parables until the truth which they contain has been thought out by the man that hears them. For the disciples much of Christ's teaching remained in a parabolic form, until the Spirit brought all things which He had said to the mind, and quickened their minds so that they could grasp its meaning. (Comp., *e.g.*, chap. ii. 20—22.)

**But the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs.**—For "proverbs," read *parables*, as in last verse. For the time referred to, comp. verses 16 and 23. In that time He will be present with them in the Advocate, and will no longer need parables or words, but will, to the depth of their spirit, communicate to them in all fulness and plainness the eternal truth of the Father (verse 13 *et seq.*).

(26) **At that day ye shall ask in my name.**—Comp. Notes on verses 23 and 24. When guided by the Paraclete, the life will be subject to the will of Christ, and the prayer will be in His name.

**And I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you.**—These words have often been taken to mean, "That I will pray the Father for you, is a matter of course, of which I need not tell you;" but this sense is excluded by the following verse. The thought is rather, "I do not speak of praying for you, because in the presence of the Advocate you will yourselves be able to pray in My name to the Father." His prayer is thought of as not necessary for them, and yet the form of the words implies that He will pray for them if it should be needed. While their hearts are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and they maintain communion with the Father, they will need no other Advocate, but "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John ii. 1). Comp. chaps. xiv. 16 and xvii. 9, which refer to the time which precedes the gift of the Holy Ghost.

(27) **For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me.**—Comp. Notes on chap. xiv. 21, 23. The introduction of the thought again here reminds us that, although in the fulness of the higher spiritual life there is communion between the Father and the human spirit, because the Father Himself ever loveth the heart which can receive His love, this power to receive the love of the Father is itself the result of loving the Son, who has revealed Him. Our Lord is leading them to the fuller truths of spiritual communion with God, and even tells them that this will be independent of mediation; but the very words which tell them that it will be independent of mediation, tell them that all depends upon His own mediation and the manifestation of the love of God in His own person.

**And have believed that I came out from God.**—The reading is uncertain. Several of the better MSS. read, ". . . that I came forth from the Father." (Comp. the first words of the next verse and chap. xiii. 3.) The perfect tenses represent their love and faith as completed, and continuing in the present. It is striking that the order of the words makes faith follow love. This order may be chosen to mark emphatically the connection between the Father's love for the disciples and their love for the Son; but it also suggests that their convictions were the result of having their hearts opened by love so that they received the truth.

(28) **I came forth from the Father.**—Comp. Note on verse 19. He repeats with emphasis that which in the last verse He stated as believed by them—"It is true. I did come forth from the Father, and came into the world. But what follows from this? Heaven, and not earth, is My home. I leave the world again and return to the Father." They had accepted the truth of the Incarnation, but in this there was

(29) His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.[1] (30) Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. (31) Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? (32) Behold,[a] the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own,[2] and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. (33) These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

[2] Or, *his own home.*

[1] Or, *parable.*

[a] Matt. 26. 31.

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already implied the truth of the Ascension, and in the truth of the Ascension there was implied the gift of the Paraclete, and the spiritual return and constant presence of Christ in the Church (verse 7 and chap. xiv. 14—18).

(29) **Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.**—Better, . . . *parable,* as in verse 25. (Comp. Note there.) The emphasis is upon the word "now." He had told them (verse 25) that the hour would come when He would speak to them no more in parables, but tell them plainly of the Father. His last words have explained what they before could not understand, and it seems to them that the illumination promised in the future has already come.

(30) **Now are we sure that thou knowest all things.**—Comp. verses 19 and 23. The "now" is emphatic, as in the previous verse. They see in His present knowledge of their thoughts, and in the light which has come to them from the statements of verse 28, the fulfilment of the promise which He has made for the future (verse 23). They think that the day has already come when they shall ask Him nothing, for He knows all things, and communicates to them the fulness of truth.

**By this we believe that thou camest forth from God.**—They had believed this before (verse 27), but here, as frequently, St. John remembers the development of their faith. (Comp. Note on chap. ii. 11.) They find, in His knowledge of their thoughts (verse 19), and in the full solution which He gives to their difficulties, ground for a new faith; and upon this new proof of His divinity they have a new faith in Him. (Comp. the instance of Nathanael's faith at the end of chap. i.)

(31) **Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe.**—Comp. Note on chap. i. 50. Here, as there, the words do not necessarily ask a question; and, although many expositors prefer to take them interrogatively, a sense more in harmony with the context is got by understanding them as an assertion. Our Lord did not doubt their present faith (chap. xvii. 8); but He knew that the hour of their full illumination had not yet come, firmly as they believed it had. Their present light was as the flash of the meteor—brilliant, but passing away. The clear and steadfast light of day was in the future, of which He has spoken to them. They think the hour of full knowledge has come. He sees the time when they shall all be scattered and leave Him alone, close at hand. It is this thought which He expresses to them—"*Now* ye do believe: Behold, the hour cometh . . ."

(32) **Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come.**—Comp. Notes on Matt. xxvi. 31 and 56.

**Every man to his own.**—Or, *his own lodging* in Jerusalem, which must be here intended. That is, as the margin renders it, "to his own home." (Comp. Note on chap. i. 11.)

**And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.**—They would each flee to his own place of sojourn. He, too, though apparently left alone, had His own home in the presence of the Father, which was ever with Him. The fact of their leaving Him could not in truth have added to His sense of loneliness. He must, even when surrounded by them, have always been alone. The thoughts of His mind were so infinitely beyond them, that the true sympathy which binds souls in companionship could never have had place. And yet He was never alone, for His life was one of constant communion with the Father. (Comp. the consciousness of this in chap. viii. 29.) Once only do we find the vision of the Father's presence eclipsed for a moment by the thick darkness of the world's sin; but the wail of agony, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Matt. xxvii. 46) is straightway followed by the assurance of His presence, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit" (Luke xxiii. 46.)

Alone and not alone. It was so in the human life of our Lord; it is so in the life of His followers. There is a sense in which each one is alone; and there is a depth of being into which no human friend can ever enter. There is a loneliness which of itself would lead to despair, were it not that its very existence tells of and leads to the never-failing communion with God:—

> "Who hath the Father and the Son
> May be left—but *not* alone."

(33) **These things I have spoken unto you . . .**—At the conclusion of the discourse He sums up in a single thought what was the object of it, "Peace in Him. In the world, indeed, tribulation, but this as conquered in Him, and not interrupting the true peace in Him." The thought is closely allied to that of the last verse, "Alone and not alone;" "Troubled, and yet having peace." He had spoken of this from chap. xiv. 1 onwards, and from xv. 18—xvi. 4 specially of the tribulation which awaited them. (Comp. St. Paul's experience of these contrasts in 2 Cor. iv. 8 *et seq.*)

**That in me ye might have peace.**—Comp. Notes on chaps. xiv. 27 and xv. 7.

**In the world ye shall have tribulation.**—The reading of the better MSS. is, "In the world ye have tribulation." It is the general statement of their relation to the world. The two clauses answer to each other—the one defining the origin of their inner, the other of their outer life. The life in the world is but the life as it is seen by others; the true life is that which is in communion with God through Christ, and that is one of never-failing peace, which no tribulation can ever affect. Peace is the Christian's birthright, and his joy no one taketh from him (verse 22, chap. xiv. 27).

**But be of good cheer: I have overcome the world.**—The pronoun is strongly emphatic, "*I* have Myself overcome the world." He speaks of the assured victory as though it were already accomplished. (See

CHAPTER XVII.—(1) These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: (2) as thou hast given him power over all flesh,[a] that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. (3) And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. (4) I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. (5) And now, O Father, glorify thou me

[a] Matt. 28. 18.

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Note on verse 11 and chaps. xii. 31 and xiii. 31.) Here is the reason why they should take courage and be of good cheer. He is the Captain of their salvation, and has already won the victory. The enemies they fear, the world in which they have tribulation, are already captives following in the Conqueror's train. They themselves have pledges of victory in and through His victory.

## XVII.

[(3) LOVE MANIFESTED IN HIS INTERCESSORY PRAYER (chap. xvii. 1—26). HE PRAYS—

(*a*) *For Himself; the glory of the Son* (verses 1—5);

(*b*) *For the disciples; their union with the Father and the Son* (verses 6—19);

(*c*) *For all believers; their union* (verses 20, 21); *their communion with the Godhead* (verses 22—24); *which results from the revelation to them of the Father* (verses 25, 26).]

(1) **These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven.**—Comp. Note on chap. xiv. 31. If the view thus adopted is the correct one, it follows that the prayer of this chapter, as well as the discourses which preceded it, was uttered as they were preparing to leave the chamber after supper. The words "to heaven" ought not to be taken to imply that he looked up to the sky, and must, therefore, have been in the open air. The upward look is naturally expressive of feeling, and irrespective of place. This chapter contains, then, the words uttered by our Lord, with eyes lifted up to heaven, in prayer to the Father. It is often spoken of as the High Priest's Prayer (comp. verse 19). He who would understand it must remember that he is in the Holy of Holies, and must approach it with eyes and heart uplifted to the God to whom and by whom it was spoken.

Bengel speaks of this chapter as the simplest in word, and profoundest in thought, in the whole Bible. The key to the thought is in the presence of the Spirit, who shall guide into all truth (chap. xvi. 26).

**Father, the hour is come.**—"Father," without any addition, as in verses 5, 21, 24. Comp. "Our Father," in the prayer taught to the disciples, and "Holy Father" and "Righteous Father" in verses 11 and 25. In the first petition of this prayer the disciples are not identified with Him, and yet He does not by the use of the singular person exclude them. Through Him they and all believers receive the spirit of adoption, and cry, as He cried, "Abba, Father." For the thought of the hour, comp. chaps. xii. 23, 28, and xiii. 1, 31, 32.

**Glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.**—What is meant by glorifying the Son is further explained in verse 5. But this implies the dark path of death, which has to be trodden before that glory will be attained. (Comp. chap. xii. 23 *et seq.*) The glorifying of the Father by the Son is the manifestation of God's glory in the completion of the Messianic work by the mission of the Advocate and the future victories of the Church. This is further explained in verses 2—4.

(2) **As thou hast given him power over all flesh.**—Better, *According as thou gavest Him . . .* This is the ground on which the prayer in verse 1 is based. (Comp. chaps. x. 36 and xiii. 3.) The glory for which He asks is in accordance with the decree which appointed His Messianic work.

"All flesh" represents a Greek translation of a Hebrew phrase. It occurs again in Matt. xxv. 22; Mark xiii. 20; Luke iii. 6; Acts ii. 17; Rom. iii. 20; 1 Cor. i. 29, and xv. 39; Gal. ii. 16; 1 Pet. i. 24. St. John uses it in this place only. Its especial signification is humanity as such, considered in its weakness and imperfection.

**That he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.**—Literally, *That all whom thou gavest Him, He may give to them eternal life.* (Comp. verse 6, and Note on chap. vi. 37 *et seq.*) The word "all" is in the Greek a neuter singular, and signifies collectively the whole body of humanity given to Christ. The word for "to them" is masculine and plural, and signifies the individual reception on the part of those to whom eternal life is given. (Comp. Notes on chap. vi. 39, 40.)

(3) **And this is life eternal.**—For these words, which are more frequent in St. John than in any other of the New Testament writers, comp. chaps. iii. 15, 16, 36; v. 24, 39; vi. 27, 40, 47, 54, 68; x. 28; xii. 25, 50; 1 John i. 2; ii. 15; iii. 15; v. 11, 13, 20. The thought of the previous verse is that the Messianic work of Christ is to give eternal life to those whom God has given Him. The thought of the following verse is that He has accomplished this work. In this verse He shows in what its accomplishment consists—*viz.*, in revealing to men the only true God through Jesus Christ.

**That they might know thee the only true God.**—Better, *That they might recognise Thee as the only true God.* (Comp. Notes on chaps. i. 9, and xiv. 7.)

**And Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.**—Better, *And Him, whom Thou didst send, Jesus, as Messiah.* Eternal life consists in the knowledge of the Father as the only Being answering to the ideal thought of God; and in this knowledge manifested in Him, whom God anointed and sent into the world to declare His attributes and character. Only in the Word made flesh can we hear the voice of mercy, forgiveness, love, fatherhood; which comes to men as the breath of life, so that they become living souls.

(4) **I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work . . .**—Better, *I glorified Thee on earth: I finished the work . . .* The former sentence is explained by the latter. God was glorified in the completion of the Messianic work of Christ. For this conception of the work of life, which includes the whole life as manifesting God to man, comp. Notes on chaps. v. 36; ix. 4; x. 25 *et al.*

(5) **And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self.**—These words are exactly parallel with the commencement of the previous verse. "I,"

with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. (6) I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. (7) Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. (8) For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received *them,* and have known surely that I came out from thee,[a] and they have believed that thou didst send me. (9) I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me;

[a] ch. 16. 27.

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"Thou," "Thee—Me," "on earth," "with Thine own self." (Comp. chap. xiii. 31, 32.)

**With the glory which I had with thee before the world was.**—This clause admits of but one meaning—*viz.,* that Jesus claimed for Himself the possession of the divine glory in His pre-existent state before the world was; and that He claimed this in personality distinct from, but in essence one with God. (Comp. chap. i. 1 and 18, and on the whole passage, Notes on Phil. ii. 4—9.) The special importance of the thought here is that it is uttered in the words of Christ Himself, and that these words are a prayer to the Father. There can be no explanation of verses 1—5 of this chapter, which denies that our Lord Jesus Christ claimed for Himself that He was divine, and co-eternal with the Father.

(6) **I have manifested** (better, *I manifested*) **thy name unto the men which thou gavest me** (better, *Thou hast given Me*) **out of the world.**—This manifestation of the name of God is the making Him known as the only true God, and the glorifying Him on earth of verses 3 and 4. For the special form in which the thought is expressed ("Thy name"), comp. Note on Matt. vi. 9.

He thinks of the disciples as a body separated from the world (comp. Note on chap. xv. 19), and as given to Him by the Father. (Comp. Note on chap. vi. 37.)

**Thine they were, and thou gavest** (better, *hast given*) **them me.**—The meaning of these words is that they were morally prepared by the earlier manifestation of God for the fuller manifestation in Christ. They were God's in more than name, and therefore when Christ was revealed to them, they recognised Him of whom Moses and the prophets did speak. (Comp. chap. i. 37 *et seq.,* and especially Notes on chaps. v. 46; vi. 37; viii. 47.)

**And they have kept thy word.**—Comp. Notes on chaps. viii. 51, and xiv. 23. He says here, "Thy word," not "My word," because the thought of these verses (6—8) is that they were originally and were still the Father's. They had been given to the Son, but this was only the completion of the revelation of the Father to them. Christ's word was that of the Father who sent Him. (Comp. Notes on chaps. vii. 16; xii. 48, 49.)

(7) **Now they have known . . .**—Better, *Now they do know.* The word means "They have come to know, and do know." (Comp. Note on chap. xvi. 30.) This is the result of their spiritual training—in its fulness, indeed, still future, but regarded as in the immediate present.

**All things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.**—We ought to assign no limit to the extent of these words. The lesson He had been teaching them, and which they were about fully to know, was that the whole life of Christ—the words He had spoken (chap. xii. 49), the works He had done (chap. v. 36)—was a manifestation of the Father.

(8) **For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me.**—Our Lord explains in this verse how the disciples attained to the knowledge He had spoken of in verse 7, and lays stress in the first place on His own work in teaching them, "I, on My part, have given unto them," and on the matter taught as that which the Father had committed unto Him (chap. xii. 49).

**And they have received them.**—Not less emphatic is the work of the disciples themselves. "They on their part received them." Others had been taught, and did not receive. The teaching was the same; the varying effect was in the heart of the hearer. (Comp. chap. i. 12 and 18.)

He has spoken of the teaching and the reception. He proceeds to the two-fold result.

**And have known** (better, *and knew*) **surely that I came out from thee.**—Comp. Notes on chaps. iii. 2, and xvi. 30.

**And they have believed** (better, *and they believed*) **that thou didst send me.**—The addition of this clause is in part to be explained as the Hebrew fulness of expression, and in part as an advance on the truth, "I came out from Thee." That He came from God they knew by the harmony of His doctrine with the voice of God, which was already speaking in their consciences. But more than this, they believed Him to be the sent One, the Messiah, whom they expected (verse 3).

(9) **I pray for them: I pray not for the world.**—Better, *I am praying for them: I am not praying for the world.* Both pronouns are emphatic. "I who have during my work on earth taught them;" "they who have received the truth" (verse 8). "I who am about to leave the world;" "they who will remain in the world" (verse 11). The tense is the strict present, referring to the prayer which He is at this moment uttering, and not to His general practice, which the Authorised version may be taken to express. Against any limitation of the prayer of our Lord, see verse 21, and His own prayer for His enemies, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii. 34). Comp. also His command to His disciples to pray for "them which despitefully used them" (Matt. v. 44). The present prayer was like that which pious Rabbis were accustomed to offer for their pupils. (Comp. Schöttgen's Note here.) It is from its very nature applicable only to disciples. He is leaving them, and commends them to His Father's care.

**But for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.**—This is the special claim on which He commends them to the Father. They were the Father's before they were given to the Son. By that gift they have become the Father's more fully (verses 6—8). They are the Father's, for all things which are the Son's are the Father's, and all things which are the Father's are the Son's (verse 10).

for they are thine. (10) And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. (11) And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we *are*. (12) While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.[a] (13) And now come I to thee; and these

[a] Ps. 109. 8.

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(10) **And all mine are thine, and thine are mine.**—Better, *And all My things are Thine, and Thy things are Mine.* The Authorised version leaves the impression that the pronouns are masculine, and that persons are exclusively meant; whereas the words are all-inclusive, and assert absolute community in all things between the Father and the Son.

**And I am glorified in them.**—The division of verses is unfortunate, as the last words of this verse are closely connected with the last words of verse 9, and the general assertion which intervenes is a parenthesis. The thought is, "For they are Thine (and all My things are Thine, and Thy things are Mine), and I am glorified in them." The fact that Christ is glorified in them forms, then, a second reason for His special prayer for them. The tense is perfect. Its accomplishment is already in part realised (verses 6—8; comp. chap. xv. 8), and is more fully to be realised in that future of the Spirit's work which all through this chapter is regarded as present. (Comp. Note on chap. xvi. 14.)

(11) **And now I am no more in the world.**—The immediate future is still regarded as present. The words have a special reference to the interval between His death and the day of Pentecost, which would be for the disciples a time of darkness and danger, when they would have special need of the Father's care.

**Holy Father.**—Comp. verses 1, 24, 25. There is a special fitness in the word "Holy" here, as in opposition to the world. The disciples were left in the world, but they were not of the world (verse 14). These were spiritually God's children, separated from the world (verse 6), and He commits them to the Holy Father, that He may keep them from the evil of the world.

**Keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me.**—The reading is slightly doubtful, but if we take what would certainly seem to be the true text, the rendering should be, *Keep them in Thy name which Thou hast given Me.* (Comp. verse 12.) The Authorised version renders the same words by "through Thy name" in this verse, and by "in Thy name" in verse 12. The thought appears to be that the revelation of the nature of God by Christ to the world (verse 6), was that which He Himself received from the Father. "I have not spoken of Myself, but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak." (Comp. Note on chap. xii. 49.)

**That they may be one, as we are.**—This clause depends upon the words, "Keep them in Thy name." They had so far realised the revelation of God that they had known Christ's whole life to be the utterance of God to their spirits (verses 6—8). He prays that they may be kept in this knowledge in order that they may so know the Father through Him, as to become themselves one with the Father.

(12) **While I was with them in the world.**—Comp. the opening words of verse 11. During His presence with them there was not this special need for commending them to the Father's care. His relation to them now is as that of a parent blessing and praying for His children before He is taken away from them. (Comp. chap. xiii. 33.)

**I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept.**—Better (comp. previous verse), *I kept them in Thy name which Thou gavest Me, and guarded them.* The pronoun is emphatic. "While I was in the world *I* kept them. I am now praying that Thou wouldest keep them." The words "kept" and "guarded" differ slightly in meaning, the former pointing to the preservation in the truth revealed to them, and the latter to the watchfulness by means of which this result was obtained. The former may be compared to the feeding of the flock, the latter to the care which protects from the wild beasts around. (Comp. chap. x. 28—30.)

**And none of them is lost, but the son of perdition.**—Better, *None of them perished, except the son of perdition.* The tense is the same as that of the word "guarded." The Good Shepherd watched His flock, and such was His care that none perished but the "son of perdition." Of him the words carefully state that "he perished." He, then, was included in "them which Thou gavest Me." For him there was the same preservation and the same guardianship as for those who remained in the fold. The sheep wandered from the flock, and was lost by his own act. (Comp. especially Notes on chap. vi. 37—39 and 71. See also chap. xviii. 9.)

The term, "son of perdition," is a well-known Hebrew idiom, by which the lack of qualitative adjectives is supplied by the use of the abstract substantives, which express that quality. A disobedient child is, *e.g.*, "a son of disobedience;" other common instances are "children of light," "children of darkness." A "son of perdition" is one in whose nature there is the quality expressed by "perdition." The phrase is used in Isa. lvii. 4 to express the apostacy of the Israelites (in English version, "children of transgression"). It occurs once again in 2 Thess. ii. 3, of the "man of sin." (Comp. Notes there.) It is used, in the Gospel of Nicodemus, of the devil. In the present passage it is difficult to express the meaning in English, because we have no verb of the same root as the abstract substantive "perdition," and no abstract substantive of the same root as the verb "perish." No exact translation can therefore give in English the point of our Lord's words, "And none of them perished except him whose nature it was to perish." Here, as often (comp. Note on chap. x. 16), the reader who can consult Luther's German will find that he exactly hits the sense: "Und ist keiner von ihnen *verloren* ohne das *verlorne* Kind."

**That the scripture might be fulfilled.**—Comp. Note on chap. xiii. 18, and Acts i. 20.

(13) **And now I come to thee.**—Comp. the first words of verse 12, with which these are in contrast.

things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. (14) I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. (15) I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. (16) They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. (17) Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. (18) As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. (19) And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified

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**And these things I speak in the world.**—The thought is that He is about to leave them, and that He utters this prayer in their hearing (comp. chap. xi. 42) that they may have the support of knowing that He who had kept them while with them, had solemnly committed them to His Father's care. The prayer itself was a lesson, and this thought is to be remembered in the interpretation of it.

**That they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.**—Comp. Notes on chaps. xv. 11 and xvi. 24. The joy here thought of is that which supported Him in all the sorrow and loneliness of His work on earth, and came from the never-failing source of the Father's presence with Him. (Comp. Note on chap. xvi. 32.) He would have them fulfilled with the abundance of this joy.

(14) **I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them.**—The terms "I" and "the world" are opposed to each other. The world's hatred followed necessarily from the fact that Christ had given them God's word, and that by it they had been separated from the world. (Comp. Note on verse 6.)

**Because they are not of the world.**—Comp. Note on chap. xv. 18.

(15) **I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world.**—The thought may naturally have come to their minds that they would be most effectually kept from the hatred and danger of which He had spoken if they were to be with Him taken out of the world. But there is for them a work in the world (verses 18, 24). He has finished the work His Father gave Him to do; He has glorified the Father on the earth (verse 4). There is a work for them to glorify Him (verse 10), and He prays not that they should be taken out of the world before their work is done. The Christian ideal is not freedom from work, but strength to do it; not freedom from temptation, but power to overcome it; not freedom from suffering, but joy in an abiding sense of the Father's love; not absence from the world, but grace to make the world better for our presence; not holy lives driven from the world, and living apart from it, but holy lives spent in the world and leavening it.

**But that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.**—Comp. Note on Matt. vi. 13. The usage of St. John is, beyond question, in favour of the masculine. The only other passages where he uses the word in the singular are 1 John ii. 13, 14; iii. 12; v. 18, 19. We have to bear in mind also that the present passage occurs in the second "Lord's Prayer," and that His prayer for them may with probability be interpreted in the same sense as the words in which He taught them to pray. On the whole, therefore, it seems likely, but yet is by no means certain, that we ought to read here, "that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one."

(16) **They are not of the world.**—These words are repeated from verse 14. The thought of their being still in the world leads on to their mission in the world, and the prayer passes from the thought of preservation to that of their sanctification for their work. Their fitness for this is prominent in this verse. Already they are not of the world, even as He is not of the world.

(17) **Sanctify them through thy truth.**—Better, *in Thy truth.* Truth was the sphere in which their sanctification was to take place. They had through Christ received the Father's word, which was truth, and had passed into a new region of life, separate from the world (verses 6—8, 14—16). He has prayed that the Father would preserve them in this, and now He prays further that the Father would in this new region of life set them apart for the work to which He had sent them (verse 18).

The idea at the root of the word rendered "sanctify," is not holiness, but separation. It is opposed not to what is impure, but to what is common, and is constantly used in the Greek of the Old Testament for the consecration of persons and things to the service of God. Hence our Lord can use it of Himself in chap. x. 36, and in this context (verse 19; these are the only places where it occurs in St. John's writings). He was Himself "set apart and sent into the world." He has to send them into the world in the same way (verse 18, and chap. x. 36), and prays that they may be in the same way consecrated for their work.

**Thy word is truth.**—There is a strong emphasis in the pronoun "*Thy* word is truth." This word they had kept (verses 6—8). It had become the region of their life. They are to be the channels through which it is to pass to others (verse 20). They are already in the higher sphere of truth, in which their entire consecration is to take place, when the gifts of the Holy Spirit shall descend upon them.

(18) **As thou hast sent me into the world.**—Better, *As Thou didst send Me.* The tense points out the definite moment of His mission. (Comp. chap. x. 36.)

**So have I also sent them into the world.**—Better, *I also sent.* Comp. Notes on Matt. x. 5; Luke vi. 13. In the very word "Apostles" their mission was contained; but the thought here comprehends the immediate future of their wider mission. (Comp. Note on chap. xx. 21.)

(19) **And for their sakes I sanctify myself.**—Comp. Note on verse 17. The consecration here thought of is that to the work which was immediately before Him—the offering Himself as a sacrifice. The word was in frequent use in the special sense of an offering or sacrifice set apart to God. As a New Testament example of this, comp. Rom. xv. 16. By this consecration of Himself—which in a wider sense is for all men, but in the special sense is "for their sakes"—He will, as both Priest and Sacrifice, enter into the Holy of Holies of the heavenly temple, and will send the Holy Ghost, who will consecrate them.

**That they also might be sanctified through the truth.**—Better, as in the margin, . . . . *might be* through the truth.[1] (20) Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; (21) that they all may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. (22) And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: (23) I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast

*truly sanctified.* The words "they also" are emphatic, answering to "their sakes" and "myself" in the preceding clause.

(20) **Neither pray I for these alone.**—Comp. Note on verse 9. The thought of the work to which the Apostles are to be consecrated and sent leads on to the wider thought of the Church which shall believe through their word, and the prayer is enlarged to include them.

**But for them also which shall believe on me through their word.**—All the best MSS. read, "but for them also which believe;" but the sense is not affected by the change. As we have again and again found in these chapters, the future of the Church is so immediately in our Lord's thoughts that it is spoken of as actually present. "Their word" is their witness concerning Him through which men should believe (chap. xv. 27). He had manifested the nature of God to them; and they who had received His word and witnessed His work would become, by the indwelling of the Spirit in them, the means of extending this revelation of God to others. They would do this by means of the word which, in His name, they would preach. (Comp. Rom. x. 14 *et seq.*)

(21) **That they all may be one**—*i.e.*, both "these" (the Apostles) and "them also which shall believe on Me through their word" (the whole body of believers in all times and places). He expresses in this grand thought of the unity of the whole Church the fulness of the purpose of His prayer.

**As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.**—The insertion of "art," which, as the italics show, is not in the original text, weakens the sense. It is better, therefore, to omit it. The word "one," in the second clause, is of doubtful authority, and has the appearance of a gloss. The probable reading, therefore, is, *That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us;* and the meaning is that the union of the Church may be of the same essential nature as that between the Father and the Son; yea, that the union of the Church may result from the union of individual members with the Father through the Son. (Comp. chaps. xiv. 23; xv. 4—10, *et al.*) The Father in the Son and the Son in the Father; both Father and Son taking up their abode in the believer, and the believer, therefore, in the Father and the Son. This is the ideal of the unity of the Church of Christ; and if this union with God is realised by each individual, it necessarily follows that all the individuals will be one with each other. (Comp. Notes on Eph. iv. 4 *et seq.*)

**That the world may believe that thou hast sent me.**—The result of the union of believers with God, and therefore with each other, will be that the world will see in it a proof of the divine origin of Christianity, and will believe that the Father sent the Son into the world. As this will be the result, it is thought of as the purpose of the prayer for the whole body of believers. Instances of this result crowd involuntarily upon the mind. The brotherhood of Christians has ever been the witness to their common Fatherhood in God. The divisions of Christendom have ever been the weakness of the Church and the proof to the world that, in that they are divided, they cannot be of God. (Comp. Note on chap. xiii. 35.)

(22) **And the glory which thou gavest me** (better, *hast given Me*) **I have given them.**—Comp. chap. xiii. 32, and in this chapter verses 1, 5, and 24. Here, as all through this Intercessory Prayer, the future which immediately grows out of the present is regarded as present; the fulness of the glory which awaits Him at His Father's right hand is thought of as already given to Him; and the believers who have become, and will become, one with Him, to whom He has given eternal life (verse 2), are thought of as sharers in it. It is the thought which is expanded by St. Paul when he speaks of the children being "heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if we suffer with Him to the end that we may be also glorified with Him" (Rom. viii. 17); and by St. John when he speaks of "children of God being like Him because we shall see Him as He is" (1 John iii. 1, 2). In the original the pronoun "*I*" is emphatically expressed. "The glory which Thou hast given Me," our Lord's words seem to mean, "I have on My part given to them. I have fulfilled the work which Thou hast given Me to do. I have made and declared an at-one-ment between man and God. My work is done. I pray that Thou wouldst fulfil Thine own."

**That they may be one, even as we are one.**—This is here expressed, in addition to the thought of the last verse, as the purpose for which He has given to them the glory which the Father has given Him. It is future in the union of the glory of heaven; it is present in the realisation of heaven now in those who have the one common hope of their calling.

(23) **I in them, and thou in me.**—These words are best regarded as a parenthesis more explicitly setting forth the thought of the union of the Father, the Son, and the believer. The thought is continued from the last verse, "That they may be one even as we are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one." It is the thought which the words of Christ have uttered again and again, and which we yet feel that no words can utter. The disciples heard the words immediately after they had heard the allegory of the true vine (chap. xv.); and the fullest meaning of separate words and phrases in these chapters is best arrived at by remembering that they were not uttered as separate words and phrases, but that they were spoken as a whole, and should be read as a whole; and that the most unfathomable of them were spoken in prayer from the Son to the Father.

**That they may be made perfect in one.**—Better, . . . *unto one.* The unity is the result of their being made perfect. (Comp. Notes on Heb. x. 14 and 1 John ii. 5; iv. 12, 17, 18.)

**And that the world may know that thou hast sent me.**—Better, . . . *didst send Me.* Comp. verse 21. "That the world may know" (recognise) loved me. (24) Father,[a] I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. (25) O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. (26) And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare *it*: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

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[1] Or, *truly sanctified.*

CHAPTER XVIII.—(1) When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth

[a] ch. 12. 26.

A.D. 33.

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here is parallel to "that the world may believe," in the earlier verse. We are to regard it, therefore, as another instance of the repeated expression of the fulness of thought; and this is borne out by the parallel in chaps. xiii. 35, and xiv. 31. The thought which has been introduced here of the conviction of the unbelieving world, seems to be opposed to the context. The prayer is that the world, seeing in its midst the power which binds men together in unity, may believe and know that this is of God, who sent Christ into the world, and may accept for themselves the message of love which the "Sent of God" has brought unto them. (Comp. Note on chap. iii. 16.)

(24) **Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am.**—Better, *Father, I will that that which Thou hast given Me, even they may be with Me where I am.* The thought of the unity of the Church is still prominent. It is conceived as one collective whole, "that which Thou hast given Me" (comp. chap. vi. 39), and the members of it are thought of as individuals composing the whole, "even they may be."

The "I will" expresses the consciousness that His will was that of the Father, and is the prayer of Him who is one with the Father. He had before said, "I pray" (verse 9, and Note on verse 20), but the thought of the union with the Father, expressed in verse 23, leads to the fuller expression of His confidence that the prayer will be answered.

For the words, "with Me where I am," comp. Note on chap. xiv. 3.

**That they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me.**—Comp. Note on verse 22. That we are to think of the future glory of the divine-human nature of Christ, is shown by the addition of the words, "which Thou hast given Me." The pre-incarnate glory of the Son was of His divine nature only, and is not, therefore, spoken of as given to Him, nor could it be given to those who believe in Him (verse 22). That with which the Father has glorified the Son, is "the glory which He had with the Father before the world was" (verse 5), but it is the Son of man who is glorified with it, and therefore it is that human nature is made capable of receiving it.

**For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.**—Comp. Note on verse 5.

(25) **O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee.**—Better, . . . *the world indeed knew Thee not.* In these closing words of His prayer, our Lord again solemnly appeals to the Father (comp. Notes on verses 1, 5, 11), but now with the special thought of the Father's righteousness. This thought follows upon the prayer that those whom the Father had given Him may be where He is, and behold the divine glory; and the connection seems to be in the thought that sinful humanity cannot see God and live. The world, indeed, knew not God (comp. chap. xv. 21, and xvi. 3), but the Son knew God, and the disciples had recognised that He had been sent by God, and in their knowledge of Him had passed through a moral change, by which they were no longer of the world, but were sons of God (chap. i. 12).

(26) **And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it.**—The Greek word here rendered "declared" is of the same root as the verb rendered "known" in the previous verse. It is better to preserve this connection by rendering the clause, *And I made known Thy name unto them, and will make it known.* His whole teaching had been a making known of the name, character, will of God, to them. In part this had been received, but in part only. The first steps in the spiritual lessons had been taken, but in His Presence in the Paraclete He will guide them into all truth, and make known to hearts quickened to receive it, the love of God which passeth knowledge.

**That the love wherewith thou hast loved** (better, *didst love*) **me may be in them, and I in them.**—Comp. Note on chap. xv. 9. The thought of Christ's prayer in this verse is expanded in St. Paul's prayer in Eph. iii. 17—19. It is more than that God may love the disciples, even as He loved the Son; it is that they may so know the nature of God that this love may be in them, dwelling in them as the principle of their life. And then the thought passes on to that fulness which has been present all through this last discourse and prayer, "and I in them." (Comp. verse 23.) Going from them, to be yet with them; not to be with them only as a Person without, but as a power within. "I in them" are the last words of the Intercessory Prayer. The words remain in all their comfort for them in whom "Christ is formed;" in all their encouragement for doubting hearts seeking to know God; in all their warning for hearts that do not seek His presence. They are the prayer of Him who knoweth that the Father always heareth Him.

## XVIII.

[5. **The Climax of Unbelief. Voluntary Surrender and Crucifixion of Jesus** (chaps. xviii. 1—xix. 42).

- (1) THE BETRAYAL AND APPREHENSION (verses 1—11).
- (2) THE TRIALS BEFORE THE JEWISH AUTHORITIES (verses 12—27);
  - (*a*) *Before Annas* (verses 12—23);
  - (*b*) *Before Caiaphas* (verse 24).
  - (*c*) *Denied by St. Peter* (verses 17, 25, 27).
- (3) THE TRIALS BEFORE THE ROMAN PROCONSUL (chaps. xviii. 28—xix. 16);
  - (*a*) *The first examination. The kingdom of truth* (verses 28—40);
  - (*b*) *The second examination. The scourging and mock royalty* (chap. xix. 1—6);
  - (*c*) *The third examination. The power from above* (verses 7—11);
  - (*d*) *The public trial and committal* (verses 12—16).

with his disciples over the brook Cedron,[a] where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples. (2) And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus ofttimes resorted thither with his disciples. (3) Judas[b] then, having received a band *of men* and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. (4) Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? (5) They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am *he*. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with

[a] Matt. 26. 36.

[b] Matt. 26. 47.

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(4) JESUS SUBMITS TO DEATH (chap. xix. 17—42);
(*a*) *The Crucifixion* (verses 17—24);
(*b*) *The sayings on the Cross* (verses 25—30);
(*c*) *The proof of physical death* (verses 31—37);
(*d*) *The body in the Sepulchre* (verses 38—42).]

In this chapter we again come upon ground which is common to St. John and the earlier Gospels. Each of the Evangelists has given us a narrative of the trial and death of our Lord. The narrative of each naturally differs by greater or less fulness, or as each regarded the events from his own point of view, from that of all the others. It is only with that which is special to St. John that the notes on his narrative have to deal. The general facts and questions arising from them have already been treated in the notes on the parallel passages.

(1) **He went forth with his disciples**—*i.e.*, He went forth from the city. (Comp. chap. xiv. 31.)

**The brook Cedron.**—The Greek words mean exactly "the winter torrent Kedron," and occur again in the LXX. of 2 Kings xv. 23, and 3 Kings xv. 13. The name is formed from a Hebrew word which means "black." The torrent was the "Niger" of Judæa, and was so called from the colour of its turbid waters, or from the darkness of the chasm through which they flowed. The name seems to have been properly applied not so much to the torrent itself as to the ravine through which it flowed, on the east of Jerusalem, between the city and the Mount of Olives. Its sides are for the most part precipitous, but here and there paths cross it, and at the bottom are cultivated strips of land. Its depth varies, but in some places it is not less than 100 feet. (Comp. article, "Kidron," in Kitto's *Biblical Cyclopædia*, vol. ii., p. 731; and for the reading see *Excursus B: Some Variations in the Text of St. John's Gospel.*)

**Where was a garden.**—Comp. Matt. xxvi. 36. St. John does not record the passion of Gethsemane, but this verse indicates its place in the narrative. (Comp. Note on chap. xii. 27.)

(2) **And Judas also, which betrayed.**—Better, . . . *who was betraying Him.* The original word is a present participle, and marks the Betrayal as actually in progress.

**For Jesus ofttimes resorted thither with his disciples.**—This is one of the instances of St. John's exact knowledge of the incidents which attended the Jerusalem life of our Lord. (Comp. *Introduction*, p. 371.) All the Evangelists narrate the coming of Judas. John only remembers that the spot was one belonging, it may be, to a friend or disciple, where Jesus was in the habit of going with His disciples, and that Judas therefore knew the place, and knew that he would probably find them there.

(3) **A band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees.**—Better, *the band, and officers from the chief priests and Pharieess.* The other Gospels tell us of a "great multitude" (Matt.), or "multitude" (Mark and Luke). St. John uses the technical word for the Roman cohort. It was the garrison band from Fort Antonia, at the north-east corner of the Temple. This well-known "band" is mentioned again in the New Testament (in verse 12; Matt. xxvii. 27; Mark xv. 16; Acts xxi. 31). (Comp. Notes at these places.) The word occurs also in Acts x. 1 ("the Italian band") and xxvii. 1 ("Augustus' band"). The Authorised version misleads, by closely connecting in one clause two distinct things, "a band of men and officers." The band was Roman; the "officers" were the Temple servants, of whom we read in chap. vii. 32 and 45. These were sent, here, as there, by the chief priests and Pharisees, with Judas for their guide, and their authority was supported by the civil power.

**Lanterns and torches and weapons.**—Better, *with torches and lamps* (Matt. xxv. 1) *and arms.* The torches and lamps were part of the regular military equipment for night service. Dionysius describes soldiers rushing out of their tents with torches and lamps in the same words which are used here (chap. xi. 40). They are not mentioned in the other Gospels. St. Matthew and St. Mark describe the "weapons" as "swords and staves."

(4) **Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come** (better, *were coming*) **upon him.**—Comp. Matt. xxvi. 45.

**Went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?**—*i.e.*, probably, went forth from the garden itself. (Comp. Note on verse 26.) Other possible interpretations are, "went forth from the depth of the garden;" or, "went forth from the circle of the disciples standing round;" or, "went forth from the shade of the tree into the moonlight." For the word, comp. verse 1, and Matt. xiv. 14). The kiss of Judas, mentioned in all the earlier Gospels, must be placed here between "went forth" and "said unto them."

For the question, comp. Matt. xxvi. 50. Jesus will boldly face the danger, and direct it upon Himself, that the disciples may be saved from it (verse 8).

(5) **They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth.**—He was known to many of them (chap. vii. 32, 46; Matt. xxvi. 55); but this is probably an official declaration of the person with whose apprehension they are charged.

**I am he.**—Comp. Notes on chap. viii. 18, 58.

**And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.**—He had advanced to give the signal of the kiss (verse 4), and had again retreated, and was now standing with them. He is mentioned in accordance with the vivid impression which the fact left upon the Apostle's mind. Judas, who had been one of them, who had been present with them, and had received bread from his Master's hand on that very night, was now standing with the officers of the Sanhedrin and the Roman band, who had come to capture Him! The position of the words suggests also that Judas was in some way specially connected with the fact that on them. (6) As soon then as he had said unto them, I am *he*, they went backward, and fell to the ground. (7) Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. (8) Jesus answered, I have told you that I am *he:* if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: (9) that the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.[a] (10) Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. (11) Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

(12) Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him, (13) and led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to

[a] ch. 17. 12.

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hearing the words "I am He," they fell to the ground, as though fear passed from him to those with him.

(6) **They went backward, and fell to the ground.**—There is nothing in the narrative to suggest that our Lord put forth miraculous power to cause this terror. The impression is rather that it was produced by the majesty of His person, and by the answer which to Jewish ears conveyed the unutterable name, "Jehovah" (I AM). (Comp. Note on chap. viii. 24, 25.) Guilt trembled before the calmness of innocence. Man fell to the ground before the presence of God. To Judas the term must have been familiar, and have brought back a past which may well have made him tremble at the present. To the officers the voice came from Him of whom they had been convinced before that "Never man spake like this man" (chap. vii. 46). They have come to take Him by force, but conscience paralyses all their intentions, and they lay helpless before Him. He will surrender Himself because His hour is come (chap. xvii. 1); but His life no one taketh from Him. For this sense of awe in the presence of Christ, comp. the account of the cleansing of the Temple in chap. ii. 14 *et seq.*

(7) **Then asked he them again.**—Their fear has passed away, so that we are not to think, as men sometimes do, that they were struck to the ground helpless. His thought is still of saving those who are with Him. The question brings the same formal answer. They have no warrant to take any of those who are with Him. They seek only Jesus of Nazareth.

(8) **If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way.**—It may be that some of the Roman cohort, not knowing Jesus, were already laying hands on the disciples. In any case, they are exposed to this danger, and the Good Shepherd, who Himself goes forth to meet the danger, will shield the flock from it.

(9) **That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake.**—Comp. chap. xvii. 12. The quotation is in many ways suggestive. (1) It is not verbally accurate, *i.e.*, St. John, quoting the words of Christ, which he has himself recorded a few verses before, is at no pains to reproduce it word for word, but is satisfied in giving the substance of it. This throws light on the general literary habits and feelings of this age and race, and it is in full harmony with the usual practice of quotation in the New Testament. (2) St. John quotes with an application to temporal persecution that which had been spoken of spiritual persecution. This illustrates the kind of way in which words are said to be "fulfilled" in more than one sense. Striking words fix themselves in the mind, and an event occurs which illustrates their meaning, and it is said therefore to fulfil them, though of each fulfilment it can be only part. (Comp. especially Notes on chaps. ii. 17, and xii. 38 *et seq.*) (3) The quotation shows that in the thought of St. John himself, the prayer recorded in chap. xvii. is no *résumé* of the words of our Lord, but an actual record of His prayer: he quotes the "saying" as fulfilled, just as he would have quoted a passage from the Old Testament Scriptures.

(10) **Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it . . . .**—Comp. Note on Matt. xxvi. 51. The fact is recorded by all the Evangelists. St. John only tells us that it was done by Peter, and that the servant's name was Malchus. He is also careful to note, as St. Luke does too, that it was the "right ear."

(11) **Put up thy sword into the sheath.**—Comp. Note on Matt. xxvi. 52. Here again St. John's narrative is more vivid and exact. St. Matthew has "place" for "sheath."

**The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?**—Comp. Notes on Matt. xx. 22; xxvi. 39. This is the only instance of the occurrence of this familiar imagery in St. John. St. Peter's act is one of opposition to what Jesus Himself knew to be the will of the Father. There is in the words a tender trustfulness which robs the cup of all its bitterness—"The cup which My Father hath given Me." They are, as it were, an echo of the prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, which is not recorded by St. John. It is the Father to whom He has prayed, and solemnly committed the disciples (chap. xvii.); the Father whose presence never leaves Him (chap. xvi. 32); the Father into whose hands He is about from the cross to commend His Spirit (Luke xxiii. 46).

(12) **Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews.**—A stop should be placed after "captain." The "band and the captain" were the Roman cohort (comp. Note on verse 3) and their tribune (*Chiliarch;* comp. Mark vi. 21). The "officers of the Jews" were, as before, the Temple servants (see above, verse 3), and the apparitors of the Sanhedrin.

**Took Jesus, and bound him.**—Comp. Notes on Matt. xxvi. 50, and xxvii. 2.

(13, 14) **And led him away to Annas first.**—Comp. for account of Annas Note on Luke iii. 2, and Acts iv. 6. This trial before Annas was probably a preliminary investigation, distinct from the formal trial before Caiaphas, narrated in the earlier Gospels. (Comp. verses 19 and 24.)

**For he was father in law to Caiaphas.**—The personal relationship between Annas and Caiaphas had led to a closeness of connection in official duties, which makes it difficult, with our partial knowledge of the circumstances, to trace the position taken by each in the trial of our Lord. This remark of St. John's suggests that Annas may have occupied part of the high priest's palace. He had been high priest. He is called high priest in the following year (Acts iv. 6). His age would have given him authority in the Sanhedrin, Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.[1] (14) Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.[a]

(15) And Simon Peter followed Jesus,[b] and *so did* another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. (16) But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. (17) Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also *one* of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not. (18) And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

(19) The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.

[1] *And Annas sent Christ bound unto Caiaphas the high priest,* ver. 24.

[a] ch. 11. 50.

[b] Matt. 26. 58.

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which Caiaphas himself is not likely to have questioned, and he may have been President of the Sanhedrin or Father of the *Beth Dîn* (House of Judgment). Whether officially, or personally, or both, he was, from the Jewish point of view, a person whose counsel and influence were of the utmost importance, and to him they bring Jesus for this doctrinal investigation (verse 19); while it is necessary that He should be sent to the legal high priest for official trial in the presence of the Sanhedrin (verse 24), before being handed over to the civil power (verse 28). It does not follow that the high priest (Caiaphas) was not present at this investigation; but it was altogether of an informal character.

**Which was the high priest that same year.**—On this clause, and the whole of the following verse, comp. Notes on chap. xi. 49—52. The prophecy is quoted now that its fulfilment is close at hand, and that the act of Caiaphas is about to lead to it.

(15) **And Simon Peter followed Jesus.**—Better, *And Simon Peter was following Jesus.* (Comp. Matt. xxvi. 58.)

**Another disciple.**—The reading is not certain, but the majority of the better MSS. support the text of the Authorised version. Others have, "*The* other disciple," which would mean, "The well-known disciple." It has been usual to understand that John himself is intended by this designation, and this opinion agrees with the general reticence of the Gospel with regard to him. (Comp. chaps. i. 40; xiii. 23; xix. 26; and *Introduction*, p. 375.) It agrees also with the fact that Peter and John are elsewhere found in special connection with each other (Luke xxii. 8; Acts i. 13; iii. 1; iii. 3, 4, 11; iv. 13, 19; viii. 14). We are warranted, therefore, in saying that this opinion is probable, but not in assuming that it is necessarily true, as is often done. It may be, for instance, that by this term the Evangelist indicates his brother James, who is never mentioned in this Gospel. The fact that he is himself called "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (chap. xiii. 23, and xix. 26; comp. *Introduction*, p. 375), is against rather than for the opinion that he is here called "another disciple." If we adopt the reading, "*the* other disciple," the opinion has more support.

**Was known unto the high priest.**—How he was known we have no means of judging. We may, however, note that the name "John" occurs among the names of the kindred of the high priest in Acts iv. 6.

**Into the palace of the high priest.**—Better, perhaps, *into the court of the high priest.* (Comp. Matt. xxvi. 3, 58, 69.) St. John uses the word elsewhere only of the sheepfold (chap. x. 1, 16). It has been established beyond doubt that the title "high priest" may have been and often was given to those who had held the sacred office. We cannot, therefore, say positively that it is not here given to Annas. It is, however, in the highest degree improbable that it is given in this chapter, after the words of verse 13, to Annas and Caiaphas without distinction. The writer has in that verse clearly marked out Caiaphas as the high priest that year, and consistency requires that we should uniformly understand him to be designated by the title. The apparent difficulty here is met by the remark in verse 13, that Annas was father-in-law to Caiaphas. (See Note there.)

(16) **But Peter stood at the door without.**—*i.e.*, at the door of the court. He remained here with the crowd. Jesus as a prisoner, and the other disciple as a friend of the high priest, went into the court.

**Unto her that kept the door.**—Comp. Acts xii. 13 and 2 Sam. iv. 6 (LXX.). That women "kept the door" among the Jews we know from Josephus (*Ant.* vii. 2. § 1).

(17) On Peter's denials, comp. Notes on Matt. xxvi. 69—75, and see in this Gospel chap. xiii. 38.

**Art not thou also one of this man's disciples?**—*i.e.*, "Thou as well as thy friend, whom I know." There is no charge brought against him. The words are apparently simply words of recognition, or as furnishing a reason for admitting him with his friend, but Peter is conscious that he had attempted to kill, and had succeeded in wounding, one of the high priest's servants. He therefore dreads this recognition.

(18) **And the servants and officers stood there.**—*i.e.*, in the quadrangular court. The "servants" are the household servants or slaves of the high priest. The officers are the Temple servants. (Comp. Note on verse 3.)

**A fire of coals.**—In the Greek this phrase is expressed by one word which occurs again in the New Testament in chap. xxi. 9; and in the LXX. in Ecclus. xi. 30, 32; and 4 Macc. ix. 20. It means a glowing fire. One of the Greek translators (Aquila) uses it in Ps. cxix. 4 (English version cxx. 4: "coals of juniper"—that is, of the broom plant).

**Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.**—It is implied that the other disciple had been admitted into the house. As the houses were usually constructed, the court would be visible from the interior. Peter has already been identified as a disciple. To stand aloof would have been to call further attention to himself. He joins the company, therefore, round the fire.

(19) **The high priest then asked Jesus.**—Comp. Notes on verse 15. By the "high priest" is probably meant Caiaphas, though this preliminary investigation was held before Annas, and in his house, or that part of the high priest's palace occupied by him.

**Of his disciples, and of his doctrine.**—This was the general subject of a series of questions. He

(20) Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. (21) Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said. (22) And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand,[1] saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? (23) Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me? (24) Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.[a]

(25) And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him,[b] Art not thou also *one* of his disciples? He denied *it,* and said, I am not. (26) One of the servants of the high priest, being *his* kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see

[a] Matt. 26. 57.

[b] Matt. 26. 69.

[1] Or, *with a rod.*

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asked, we may think, about the number of Christ's followers; the aim they had in view; the principles which He had taught them. The object of the questions was apparently to find some technical evidence in Christ's own words on which they may support the charges they are about to bring against Him in the legal trial before Caiaphas.

(20) **I spake openly to the world.**—He does not distinctly answer the question about His disciples, but His words imply that all may have been His disciples. The pronoun is strongly emphatic; "I am one," His words mean, "who spake plainly and to all men." "My followers have not been initiated into secret mysteries, nor made conspirators in any political organisation." "I have not been a leader, and they have not been members, of a party."

**I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort.**—The better reading omits the article before "synagogue," as in chap. vi. 59, and reads for the last clause, *where all the Jews resort.* "In synagogue" is an adverbial phrase, as we say "in church." His constant custom was to teach "in synagogue," and in Jerusalem He taught in the temple itself, which was the resort of all the leaders of the people. This refers to His general custom, and does not, of course, exclude His teaching in other places. The point is that during His public ministry He was constantly in the habit of teaching under the authority of the officers of the synagogues and the temple. That was the answer as to what His doctrine had been.

**And in secret have I said nothing.**—His private teaching of the disciples is, of course, not excluded, but that was only the exposition of His public doctrine. There was nothing in it such as they understood by "secret teaching." It was unlike "the leaven of the Pharisees which was hypocrisy;" for in it there was "nothing covered," "nothing hid." (Comp. chap. xii. 1—3.)

(21) **Why askest thou me?**—Comp. chap. v. 31. The pronoun "Me" is not the emphatic word as it is generally taken to be. The stress is on the interrogative, "*Why,* for what purpose, dost thou ask Me? If you want witnesses, ask them which heard Me."

**Behold, they know what I said.**—Better, *behold, these know what I said.* He pointed probably to some who were then present. In the next verse there is a reference to the "officers" who, as we know from chap. vii. 32, 46, had heard this doctrine.

(22) **With the palm of his hand.**—The Greek word occurs again in the New Testament only in chap. xix. 3, and Mark xiv. 65 (see Note there, and on Matt. xxvi. 67). It is uncertain whether it means here a blow with the hand or, as the margin renders it, "with a rod." The word originally means a stroke with a rod, but in classical usage it acquired also the meaning of a slap in the face, or box on the ear, and the corresponding verb is certainly used in this sense in Matt. v. 39. We may gather from Acts xxiii. 2 that a blow on the face was a customary punishment for a supposed offence against the dignity of the high priest; but in that case it was ordered by the high priest himself, and the fact that it was here done without authority by one of the attendants confirms the opinion that this was not a legal trial before the judicial authority.

(23) **Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil.**—Comp. Note on Matt. v. 39.

**Bear witness of the evil.**—That is, "Produce the evidence which the law requires."

(24) **Now Annas had sent him bound . . . .**—Better, *Annas therefore sent Him bound . . . .* The reading is uncertain; some MSS. read "Therefore;" some read "Now;" some omit the word altogether. On the whole, the evidence is in favour of "therefore." The tense is an aorist, and cannot properly have a pluperfect force. The rendering of the Authorised version is based upon the opinion that Jesus had before been sent to Caiaphas, and that all which followed from verse 13 (see margin there) had taken place after the close of the investigation before Annas. This view is certainly more probable than that the words "high priest" should be used of Annas and Caiaphas indiscriminately (comp. Note on verse 15), but both do violence to the ordinary meaning of language, and, if the interpretation which is adopted in these Notes is correct, neither is necessary.

Jesus was still "bound," as He had been from verse 12.

(25) **And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself.**—Better, *And Simon Peter was standing and warming himself.* (Comp. verse 18.) The words are repeated to draw attention to the fact that he was standing in the court at the time when Jesus was sent from Annas unto Caiaphas, that is, from one wing of the quadrangular building across the court to the other. In Luke xxii. 61 it is said that "the Lord turned and looked upon Peter."

**Art not thou also one of his disciples?**—Comp. Note to verse 17.

(26) **One of the servants of the high priest.**—Comp. Luke xxii. 59.

**Did not I see thee in the garden with him?**—This kinsman of Malchus, who had probably gone with him to the arrest, is not to be silenced by a simple denial. He asks emphatically, "Did not *I* see thee in the garden with Him?" He feels certain that he is not deceived. The probable interpretation of verse 4 is that Jesus went forth out of the garden towards the thee in the garden with him? (27) Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.

(28) Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas[a] unto the hall of judgment:[1] and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.[b] (29) Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? (30) They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee. (31) Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: (32) that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.[c] (33) Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again,[d] and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of

[a] Matt. 27. 2.

[1] Or, *Pilate's house.*

[b] Acts 19. 28.

[c] Matt. 20. 19.

[d] Matt. 27. 11.

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band and the officers. If so, the moment when the kinsman saw Peter was previous to that of Malchus' wound. If the kinsman had witnessed this, he would almost certainly have charged Peter with it now.

(27) **And immediately the cock crew.**—Better, . . . *a cock crew.* (Comp. Matt. xxvi. 74, and (on the whole question of the denial, Notes to verses 69—74.)

(28) On the accusation before Pilate (verses 28—38), comp. Notes on the parallels in Matt. xxvii. 11—14; Mark xv. 2—5; Luke xxiii. 2—5.

**The hall of judgment.**—Literally, *the Prætorium.* Comp. Note on Matt. xxvii. 27. It is interesting to observe the various renderings which our translators have given for this one word. Here, "hall of judgment," or "Pilate's house," and "judgment-hall;" verse 33, "hall of judgment" without the marginal alternative; chap. xix. 9, "judgment-hall;" in Matt. xxvii. 27, "common-hall," or "governor's house;" in Mark xv. 6, "prætorium" (the original word Anglicised); in Acts xxiv. 10, "judgment-hall;" in Phil. i. 13, "palace," this being perhaps the only passage where "palace" does not give the right meaning. (Comp. Note there.)

**And it was early.**—The Greek word occurs in the division of the night in Mark xiii. 35 ("even," "midnight," "cock-crowing," "morning") for the time between cock-crowing and sunrise, as we should say roughly, from three to six o'clock; but comp. Matt. xxvii. 1, and Luke xxii. 66. We must remember that Pilate must have sent the band (verse 3), and was therefore expecting its return.

**And they themselves went not into the judgment hall.**—They sent Jesus in under guard of the Roman band, while they remained outside.

**But that they might eat the passover.**—Comp. *Excursus F: The Day of the Crucifixion of our Lord.*

(29) **Pilate then went out unto them.**—Better, *Pilate therefore went out unto them—i.e.*, because of their religious scruples they would not enter into the palace.

**What accusation bring ye against this man?**—Comp. verse 33. They expected that he would have at once ordered His execution; but he asks for the formal charge which they bring against Him. He knew by hearsay what this was, but demands the legal accusation without which the trial could not proceed. As the Roman procurator, he demands what crime Jesus has committed against the Roman law.

(30) **If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.**—They take the position that the Roman is the executive, and their own the judicial power. They bring no legal charge against Jesus, but assert in effect that they themselves, who understood and had investigated the whole matter, had condemned Him to death, and that the fact that they had done so was in itself sufficient proof that He was worthy of death. They use the vague word "malefactor," "evil-doer," though in the trial before Caiaphas they had not sought to prove any evil deed, and they expect that upon this assertion Pilate will pronounce on Him, as on other malefactors, the sentence of death.

(31) **Take ye him, and judge him according to your law.**—Pilate takes them at their word. They claim the judicial right; let them exercise it. Their law gave them power to punish, but not the right of capital punishment. If they claim that the matter is wholly within their own power of judgment, then the sentence must also be limited to their own power. He can only execute a sentence which is pronounced by himself after formal trial.

**It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.**—Their words admit that they did not possess the power of life and death, while they imply that they had sentenced Jesus to death. They verbally give up the power, but in reality claim it, and regard the procurator as their executioner. The Jews had lost this power since the time that Archelaus was deposed, and Judæa became a Roman province (A.D. 6 or 7). The Talmud speaks of the loss of this power forty years or more before the destruction of Jerusalem. (Comp. Lightfoot's Note here, and in Matt. xxvi. 3.)

On the stoning of Stephen, which was an illegal act, comp. Notes on Acts vii. 57 *et seq.*

(32) **That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled.**—Comp. Note on verse 9.

**Signifying what death he should die.**—Better, *signifying by what manner of death He should die.* (Comp. Note on chap. x. 32.) For the prediction of the manner of death, comp. chaps. iii. 14; xii. 32; and Note on Matt. xx. 19. If the Jews had possessed the power to put Him to death, they would have condemned Him on the technical charge of blasphemy, for which the punishment was stoning. (Comp. chaps. viii. 59; x. 31; and Acts vii. 51 *et seq.*) Crucifixion was not a Jewish punishment, and it was in the fact that He was executed, not by Jewish authority and on the charge of blasphemy, but by Roman authority and on a charge of Majestas (high treason), that His own prophecy of the manner of His death was fulfilled.

(33) **Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus.**—Better, *Pilate therefore entered into the Prætorium* (or *palace*) *again, and called Jesus.* (Comp. verse 28.) This was practically a private investigation, for the Jews could not enter the palace (verse 28). (Comp. chap. xix. 13.)

**Art thou the King of the Jews?**—Comp. Note on Matt. xxvii. 11; Luke xxiii. 2, 3. Pilate, of course, the Jews? (34) Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? (35) Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? (36) Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. (37) Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that

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knew of the charge brought against Him when he gave permission for the Roman cohort to apprehend Him.

(34) **Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?**—The most probable interpretation of the question is that which regards it as establishing a distinction between the title "King of the Jews" as spoken by Pilate and the same title as spoken by Jesus. In the political sense in which Pilate would use it, and in this sense only the claim could be brought against Him in Roman law, He was not King of the Jews. In the theocratic sense in which a Jew would use that title, He was King of the Jews.

(35) **Pilate answered, Am I a Jew?**—His question would say, "You surely do not suppose that *I* am a *Jew?*" The procurator's Roman pride is fired at the very thought. He was the governor of the subject race. What did He know, or care to know, of their subtleties and distinctions?

**Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me.**—"So far from the question coming from me," his words mean, "It is *thine own* nation, and especially the chief priests, who have delivered Thee unto me." And then, weary of the technicalities with which a Roman trial had nothing to do, he asks the definite question, "What hast Thou done?"

(36) **Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world.**—The answer of Jesus is two-fold, declaring (1) in this verse, that He is not a King in the political sense; and (2) in verse 37, that He is a King in the moral sense. By "of this world" we are to understand that the nature and origin of His kingdom are not of this world, not that His kingdom will not extend in this world. (Comp. chaps. viii. 23 and x. 16.) In the world's sense of king and kingdom, in the sense in which the Roman empire claimed to rule the world, He had no kingdom.

**Then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews.**—Better, *then would My servants have been fighting.* (Comp. chap. xix. 16.) His "servants" are His disciples, who would be in this relation to Him if He were a temporal king, and the crowds such as those who had sought to make Him king (chap. vi. 15), and had filled Jerusalem with the cry, "Hosanna: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel" (chap. xii. 13). One of His servants had drawn the sword (verse 10), and, but that His will had checked the popular feeling, neither the Jewish officers nor the Roman cohort could have delivered Him to be crucified.

**But now is my kingdom not from hence.**—That is, "But, as a matter of fact, My kingdom is not from here." It was proved by His standing bound in the presence of the procurator. The clause has been strangely pressed into the service of millennial views by interpreting it, "But *now* My kingdom is not from hence. Hereafter it will be." For the true sense of "now," comp. chaps. viii. 40; ix. 41; xv. 22, 24.

(37) **Art thou a king then?**—The sentence is both a question and an inference from the word "kingdom" of the previous verse. There is a strong emphasis, and it may be sarcasm, expressed in the pronoun, "Does it not follow then that *Thou* art a king?"

**Thou sayest that I am a king.**—Or, perhaps, *Thou sayest; for I am a king.* (Comp. Matt. xxvi. 25.)

**To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world.**—Better, *Unto this end have I been born, and unto this end am I come unto the world.* Our translators have rendered the same Greek words by different English words—"To this end," "for this cause," intending probably that the first phrase should be understood of the words which precede, and the second of those which follow: "To this end (that I may be a king) was I born, and for this (that I may bear witness unto the truth) came I into the world." Had this been the meaning, it would have been almost certainly expressed by the usual distinction in Greek; and in the absence of any such distinction, the natural interpretation is, "To be king have I been born, and to be a king came I into the world, in order that I may bear witness unto the truth." The birth and the entrance into the world both refer to the Incarnation, but make emphatic the thought that the birth in time of Him who existed with the Father before all time, was the manifestation in the world of Him who came forth from the Father. This thought of "coming into the world" is frequent in St. John. (Comp. especially chaps. x. 36 and xvi. 28.)

**That I should bear witness unto the truth.**—Comp. Note on chap. i. 8. He has indeed a kingdom, and He came into the world to be a king; but His rule is that of the majesty of Truth, and His kingdom is to be established by His witness of the eternal truth which He had known with His Father, and which He alone could declare to man. (Comp. Notes on chaps. i. 18 and xvi. 13.) He came to be a witness—a martyr—to the truth, and to send forth others to be witnesses and martyrs to the same truth, through the Holy Spirit, who should guide them into all truth. Such was His kingdom; such the power by which it was to rule. It was not of this world: it possessed neither land nor treasury, neither senate nor legions, neither consuls nor procurators; but it was to extend its sceptre over all the kingdoms of the earth.

**Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.**—He has spoken of His kingdom. Who are its subjects, and what its power over them? Every one is included who, following the light which God has placed in his soul, comes to "the true Light which lighteth every man;" who, made in the image of God, and with capacities for knowing God, seeks truly to know Him; every one who, in an honest and true heart, is of the truth, and therefore hears the voice of Him who is the Truth. The thought is familiar to us from the earlier chapters of the Gospel. (Comp. *e.g.,* iii. 21; vii. 17; viii. 47; x. 16.)

is of the truth heareth my voice. (38) Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault *at all*. (39) But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover:[a] will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? (40) Then cried they all again,[b] saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

CHAPTER XIX.—(1) Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged *him*.[c] (2) And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put *it* on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, (3) and said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands. (4) Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. (5) Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And *Pilate* saith unto them, Behold the man! (6) When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify

[a] Matt. 27. 15.

[b] Acts 3. 14.

A.D. 33.

[c] Matt. 27. 26.

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(38) **Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?**—"'What is truth?' said jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer." Such is Lord Bacon's well-known interpretation of Pilate's well-known question. Others have seen in it the bitterness of a mind that had been tossed to and fro in the troubled sea of contemporaneous thought, and despaired of an anchorage. Others, again, have traced the tone of sarcasm in the governor's words—"Is the son of Roman freedom and Greek thought, which had at this time been welded into one power, to learn truth of a Jewish enthusiast?" while the older interpreters, for the most part, regarded the question as that of an earnest inquirer desiring to be satisfied. These are a few among the many thoughts the passage has suggested; and yet none of them seem to give the natural impression which follows from the words. Bacon's is nearest to it, but Pilate was far from jesting. He seems rather to have been irritated by the refusal of the Jews to furnish a formal accusation (verse 31), and more so at the question of Jesus in verse 34, and the subtleties, as he thinks them, of verse 36. This seems to him to be another, and at all events it is wholly irrelevant to the question at issue. He has neither time nor will to deal with it, and at once goes from the palace again to the Jews.

**I find in him no fault at all.**—Better, *I find no crime in Him.* St. John uses the word rendered "fault" only in this phrase. (Comp. xix. 4, 6.) It is used by St. Matthew (xxvii. 37) for the technical "accusation written, This is Jesus, the King of the Jews," and this seems to be the sense here. "I find no ground for the legal charge (verse 33). Whatever He may be, there is no proof of treason against the majesty of Cæsar."

On the attempt of Pilate to release Jesus (verses 39, 40), comp. Matt. xxvii. 15—23; Mark xv. 6—14; Luke xxiii. 13—23. It is preceded in St. Luke by the trial before Herod (verses 6—12).

(39) **At the Passover.**—Comp. *Excursus F: The Day of the Crucifixion of our Lord.*

**The King of the Jews.**—These words are of course said in mockery, but not at Jesus who was still in the palace. They seem to mean, "This is your king; Such is your national subjection, that He is bound in the Prætorium of the Roman governor. Shall I release Him unto you?"

(40) **Then cried they all again.**—St. John has not recorded any clamour before, but implies that of Matt. xv. 8, and Luke xxiii. 5—10.

**Now Barabbas was a robber.**—Comp. Note on chap. x. 1. The word includes the meaning of unrestrained violence, which often leads to bloodshed (Mark xv. 7; Luke xxiii. 19), and is thus used in a striking parallel in Sophocles:—

> "And him, so rumour runs, *a robber band*
> Of aliens *slew*."—
> (*Œdipus Rex.*, 724. Plumptre's Translation.)

There is a solemn emphasis given to the context by the abrupt brevity of the sentence. (Comp. chaps. xi. 35, xiii. 30; see also Acts iii. 14.)

## XIX.

For the scourging of Jesus and the delivery to be crucified (verse 1—16), comp. generally Notes on Matt. xxvii. 24—30; Mark xv. 15—19; Luke xxiii. 24, 25.

(1) **Then Pilate therefore took Jesus.**—For the connection and the force of "therefore" comp. Luke xxiii. 21—23.

(2) For the **crown of thorns,** comp. Matt. xxvii. 26; and for the **purple robe,** Matt. xxvii. 28; Mark xv. 17.

(3) **And said, Hail, King of the Jews.**—The reading of the better MSS. is, *and they kept coming to Him and saying* . . . It is a description of the mock reverence which they paid Him. They kept drawing near and bowing before Him. (Comp. Matt. xxvii. 29.)

**They smote him with their hands.**—Comp. Note on chap. xviii. 22.

(4) **Pilate therefore went forth again.**—He had returned to the palace, and had ordered the scourging in the courtyard (Mark xv. 15, 16). He now goes forth again with Jesus wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, and hopes by the spectacle to move the sympathy of the people, and to prevent the design of the rulers.

**That ye may know that I find no fault in him.**—Comp. Note on chap. xviii. 38. Had he found proof of a legal crime he would have ordered His execution, and not have led Him forth in this mock royal attitude to move the feelings of the people.

(5) **Then came Jesus forth.**—The verse describes the scene as the writer remembers it. The figure of the Lord whom he had himself followed and loved, and of whom he thinks as ascended to the throne of the King of kings, led in the cruel mockery of royal garments, was one which left its mark for ever in his mind.

**Behold the man!**—Pilate's "Ecce homo!" is an appeal to the multitude. That picture of suffering—is it not enough? Will none in that throng lift up a cry for mercy, and save Him from the death for which the Sanhedrin are calling?

(6) **When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him.**—Comp. chap. xviii. 3. The spectacle, so far from moving their pity, excites their

*him,* crucify *him.* Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify *him:* for I find no fault in him. (7) The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

(8) When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; (9) and went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. (10) Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? (11) Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power *at all* against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. (12) And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man

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passionate hatred, and they frustrate any other cry which may arise by that of "Crucify Him!" (Comp. Matt. xxvii. 22.)

**Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.**—Comp. Notes on chap. xviii. 31 and 38. "Crucify Him," the words mean, "if you dare to do so; there is no charge on which I can condemn Him; and I will be no party to your act."

(7) **We have a law, and by our law he ought to die.**—The better reading is, . . . . *and by the law He ought to die.* (Comp. Lev. xxiv. 16.) They feel the bitter sarcasm of Pilate's taunt, and appeal to their own law, which, in accordance with the general Roman policy, was in force in all questions which did not directly affect the Government. They change the accusation then from one of treason against Cæsar (verse 33), of which Pilate claimed to be judge, to one of blasphemy against God, of which they only could be judges; and assert that Jesus is by that law guilty of a capital offence, for which He ought to die. (Comp. Matt. xxvi. 63—66, and Luke xxiii. 70.)

(8) **When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid.**—That is, as the verses which follow show, he was the more afraid because of his wonder who Jesus really was. He must have heard of some of the current impressions as to His life and words; he had himself heard Him claim a kingdom which is not of this world; his wife's dream (Matt. xxvii. 19) had furnished an evil omen which the superstition of the most educated classes of the Roman empire would interpret as a message from the gods; and now the Jews speak of Him as one who claimed to be the Son of God. (Comp. Notes on the words of the Roman centurion in Matt. xxvii. 54.)

(9) **And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus.**—He had brought Jesus out to the people. He now led Him back to the palace in order to inquire further of Him in private.

**Whence art thou?**—The question is based upon the claim to be Son of God, of which he had heard. He knew that Jesus was a Galilean before sending Him to Herod (Luke xxiii. 6). It is not of His earthly habitation, therefore, that he inquires, but of His origin and nature. (Comp. the same word, and in the same sense, in chap. viii. 14, and Matt. xxi. 25.)

**But Jesus gave him no answer.**—This silence of our Lord has seemed hard to understand, and very many and very different have been the explanations suggested. An explanation can only be suggested; it cannot be given with any degree of certainty; but that which seems most in harmony with the position is that Pilate's question was one which to him could not be answered in reality, and therefore was not answered in appearance. The answer had, indeed, already been given (chap. xviii. 37), but he had treated it with the impatience which showed he could not receive it now. Not of the truth, he could not hear the voice of the Son of God, and therefore that voice did not speak.

(10) **Speakest thou not unto me?**—The position of the pronoun in the original is strongly emphatic—"To *me* dost Thou not speak?" Pilate is true to the vacillating character which now as man trembles before One who may be a Being from the other world, and now as Roman governor expects that Being to tremble before him.

**Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?**—The text of the better MSS. inverts the order, reading, . . . . *have power to release Thee, and have power to crucify Thee.* This is the more natural order of thought—"Thy life is in my power; yea, and Thy death also."

(11) **Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.**—Pilate had twice said, with something of the pride of his position, "I have power." Jesus says that he had of himself neither power of life nor power of death, that he had no power against Him but that which was given to him from above. By this is meant, of course, the power which was given to him by God, and the form in which it is expressed ("from above") has a special force in connection with the question of verse 8, "Whence comest Thou?" That power of which he boasted existed only because He against whom he boasts submitted to it of His own will. "He that cometh from above is above all" (chap. iii. 31). But that power was given to him of God for the carrying out of the Messianic purposes which rendered the death of Jesus necessary. The position of Pilate was that of a half-conscious agent wielding this power. He indeed had sin, for he acted against his own better nature; but not the greater sin, for he did not act against the full light of truth.

**He that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.**—This cannot mean Judas, who is nowhere mentioned in this connection, and is excluded by the words "unto thee." Judas delivered our Lord to the Jews. It was the Sanhedrin, and especially Caiaphas, the high priest, who, professing to represent God on earth, had delivered up the Son of God, and had declared that by the law He ought to die. (Comp. chaps. xi. 49; xviii. 14—28.)

(12) **And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him.**—The words may be interpreted of time, as in the Authorised version, or of cause—"For this reason Pilate sought to release Him." The latter is more probable, as the reference seems to be to the attempt which he made at once. (Comp. Note on chap. vi. 66.)

**If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend. . . .**—There was another weapon left in the armoury of their devices, against which no Roman go, thou art not Cæsar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar.

(13) When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. (14) And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! (15) But they cried out, Away with *him*, away with

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governor was proof. The jealous fear of Tiberius had made "treason" a crime, of which the accusation was practically the proof, and the proof was death. The pages of Tacitus and Suetonius abound with examples of ruin wreaked on families in the name of the "law of treason." (Comp. Merivale: *History of the Romans under the Empire*, vol. v., p. 143 *et seq.*) Here was One who had claimed to be a king, and Pilate was seeking to release Him. They knew, indeed, that it was a claim to be "king" in a sense widely different from any which would have affected the empire of Cæsar; but Pilate has refused to condemn Him on the political charge without formal trial, and he has refused to accept their own condemnation of Jesus on the charge of blasphemy. He dare not refuse the force of an appeal which says that he is not Cæsar's friend, and suggests an accusation against himself at Rome. See Note on Matt. xxvii. 2 for the special reasons which would lead Pilate to dread such an accusation.

(13) **When Pilate therefore heard that saying.**—Better . . . *these sayings*—*i.e.*, the two sayings of the previous verse.

**He brought Jesus forth . . .**—Comp. verse 9. He hesitates no longer about the course to be taken. His own position and life may be in danger, and he prepares, therefore, to pronounce the final sentence, which must necessarily be done from the public judgment seat outside the palace. (Comp. Matt. xxvii. 19.)

**The Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.**—Both these words occur here only, and are instances of the writer's minute knowledge of the localities in Jerusalem. It may have been better to have preserved the Greek name (*Lithostrōton*), as well as that by which the place was known in the Hebrew (Syro-Chaldaic) of the time. The word literally means "stone-paved," and was the Greek name for the tesselated "pavement" of marble and coloured stones with which from the time of Sylla the Romans delighted to adorn the Prætorium. The Chaldee word means "an elevated place," so that the one name was given to it from its form, and the other from the material of which it was made. Suetonius (*Life*, chap. xlvi.) tells us that Julius Cæsar carried about with him such pieces of marble and stone, but the mention of the "place" bears the impression that it was a fixture in front of the Prætorium at Jerusalem, in which the Bema was placed; or it may have been a portion of the northern court of the sanctuary to which Pilate came out, if we identify the Prætorium with the tower Antonia. (Comp. Note on Matt. xxvii. 27.) Josephus mentions that the whole of the Temple mountain was paved with this kind of Mosaic work (*Ant.* v. 5. 2. Caspari, *Chron. Geogr.*, *Introd.*, Eng. Trans., p. 225).

(14) **And it was the preparation of the passover.**—Comp. Note on Matt. xxvii. 52, and *Excursus F: The Day of the Crucifixion of our Lord.*

**And about the sixth hour.**—Comp. Notes on Matt. xxvii. 45; Mark xv. 25; Luke xxiii. 44. St. John's statement of time (twelve o'clock) seems opposed to that of St. Mark, who states that the Crucifixion took place at "the third hour" (nine o'clock); and no solution of the discrepancy is wholly satisfactory.

There are, as we may have expected, some variations of MSS., and as early as the time of Eusebius we find a suggestion that "third" should be here read for "sixth." No competent critic would, however, for a moment admit that either in the parallel in St. Mark, or in this passage, there is even a strong presumption in favour of any reading except that of the Received text.

The common supposition that St. John adopted the Roman division of hours, and that by "sixth hour" he meant six o'clock is equally unsatisfactory. (Comp. Notes on chaps. i. 39; iv. 6, 52; xi. 9.) Even if it could be proved that this method was in use at the time, the fact would not help us; for if we read this text as meaning six o'clock, it is as much too early for the harmony as twelve o'clock is too late.

It is better, therefore, simply to admit that there is a difficulty arising from our ignorance of the exact order of events, or, it may be, of the exact words which the Evangelists wrote.

Candidly admitting this, and not attempting to explain it away, we may still note:—

(1) That the earlier Gospels all make the darkness last from twelve until three (the sixth hour until the ninth hour). This is apparently intended to indicate the time of the Crucifixion, and they thus agree generally with St. John's account.

(2) That St. John distinguishes between the condemnation to be scourged (verse 1) and that to be crucified. In St. Matthew and St. Mark the flagellation is regarded as the preliminary and part of the punishment. If it was the third hour at which this commenced—*i.e.*, if the incident of verse 1 of this chapter is to be assigned to nine o'clock—then the Crucifixion itself would naturally come about twelve o'clock.

(3) That St. John is not careful to give the time more than roughly "about the sixth hour." The hours of that day may well be confused, for their sorrow would have made minutes seem as hours, and the sun, which on other days marked the hours, was on that day itself darkened. St. Matthew is equally uncertain at what exact time there was the cry with a loud voice (xxvii. 46), and St. Luke does not give the exact time when the darkness commenced (xxiii. 44).

(4) That the third, sixth, and ninth hours (comp. Matt. xx. 3, 5) seem to have been, in common life, rough divisions of the day, corresponding to the watches of the night. An event occurring at ten o'clock might have been spoken of roughly as about the third hour, while it might, on the other hand, be thought of as within the division called the sixth hour.

(5) That St. John's narrative is that of an eye-witness, relating what he himself saw and remembered. (Comp. *Chronological Harmony of the Gospels*, p. xxv.)

(14) **Behold your King!**—The words are spoken in bitter irony towards the Jews, as those in the following verse and those written over the cross (verse 19). (Comp. Note on Matt. xxvii. 37.)

(15) **But they cried out . . .**—Better, *they cried out therefore* . . . They feel the sting of Pilate's irony, therefore cry the more passionately, "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him."

*him,* crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cæsar.

(16) Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified.[a] And they took Jesus, and led *him* away. (17) And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called *the place* of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: (18) where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

(19) And Pilate wrote a title, and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. (20) This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, *and* Greek, *and* Latin. (21) Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. (22) Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

(23) Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part;[b] and also *his* coat: now the coat was

[a] Matt. 27. 31.

[b] Matt. 27. 35.

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**Shall I crucify your King?**—In the order of the Greek words "your King" comes emphatically first, "Your King—shall I crucify Him?" The taunt is uttered in its bitterest form.

**We have no king but Cæsar.**—They are driven by Pilate's taunt, and by their hatred of Jesus, to a denial of their own highest hopes. They who gloried in the Theocracy, and hoped for a temporal Messianic reign, which should free them from Roman bondage; they who boasted that they "were never in bondage to any man" (chap. viii. 33); they who were "chief priests" of the Jews, confess that Cæsar is their only king. The words were doubtless meant, as those in verse 12, to drive Pilate to comply with their wishes, under the dread of an accusation at Rome. They had this effect.

(16) **Then delivered he him therefore unto them**—*i.e.*, to the chief priests. The Crucifixion was actually carried out by the Roman soldiers, acting under the direction of the chief priests.

**And led him away.**—These words should probably be omitted.

(17) For the way of the cross, comp. Matt. xxvii. 31—34; Mark xv. 20—23; Luke xxiii. 26—33. For the present passage, comp. especially Note on the parallel words in Matt. xxvii. 33.

(18) Comp. Notes on Matt. xxvii. 38; Mark xv. 27; Luke xxiii. 33, 34.

(19) Comp. Notes on Matt. xxvii. 37; Mark xv. 26; Luke xxiii. 38. St. John speaks of the *title* placed over the cross. This was the common Roman name for an inscription of the kind, which was meant to give information of the crime for which the sentence of crucifixion had been given. St. Matthew calls it the "accusation;" St. Mark, "the superscription of the accusation;" St. Luke, "the superscription." (Comp. chap. xviii. 98.) The inscription varies in word, though not in sense, in each of the narratives; *i.e.*, the Evangelists, in dealing with a written inscription, in which there could have been neither doubt nor difficulty, have not been careful to give us the exact words. The fact is significant, as bearing upon the literary characteristics of the Gospels, and upon the value which the writers set upon exact accuracy in unimportant details. The reason of the variations may, of course, be traced to the fact that one or more of the accounts may be a translation from the Hebrew inscription.

(20) This and the following verses are peculiar to St. John, and furnish another instance of his exact knowledge of what took place at Jerusalem.

**Many of the Jews.**—That is, of the hierarchical party, as generally in this Gospel. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 19.) It has been sometimes understood here of the people generally, because the inscription was written in the three languages; but the last clause of the verse furnishes the reason for the action of the chief priests in the next verse. It would be better to punctuate the verses thus: "This title therefore read many of the Jews, because the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city. And it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Therefore said the chief priests . . ."

**Nigh to the city.**—Comp. Note on Matt. xxvii. 33.

**Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.**—"Hebrew," *i.e.*, the current Syro-Chaldaic, was the language of the people generally. The precise form which occurs here is used in the New Testament only by St. John (chaps. v. 2; xix. 13, 17, 20; xx. 16; Rev. x. 11; xvi. 16). "Greek" was the most widely-known language of the time. "Latin" was the official language of the Roman Empire.

(21) **Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate.**—Better, *Therefore said . . .*, *i.e.*, because the inscription could be read by all comers, and the Messianic title, "King of the Jews," would be exposed to scorn. Yet these are the men who said, in order to accomplish the death of Jesus, "We have no king but Cæsar."

The expression, "chief priests of the Jews," occurs only here in the New Testament, perhaps in contrast to the title, "King of the Jews," to indicate that their anxiety about the title came from them as representatives of the national honour.

**What I have written.**—The words are a formula to signify that the thing was done and could not be undone. There are frequent instances of similar expressions in the Rabbinical writings.

(23) On verses 23, 24, comp. Notes on Matt. xxvii. 35, 36; Mark xv. 24; Luke xxiii. 34. St. John's account is again more full than any of the others.

**And made four parts, to every soldier a part.**—The soldiers there who carried the sentence into execution were one of the usual quarternions (Acts xii. 4), under the command of a centurion.

**Also his coat: now the coat was without seam.**—More exactly, the *tunic*, or *under-garment*. It reached from the neck to the feet, while the outer "garment" was a square rug thrown round the body. Ordinarily the tunic consisted of two pieces connected at the shoulder by clasps; but that worn by Jesus was made in one piece. This seems to have been the rule without seam, woven[1] from the top throughout. (24) They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots.[a] These things therefore the soldiers did.

(25) Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of Cleophas,[2] and Mary Magdalene. (26) When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! (27) Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own *home*.

(28) After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.[b] (29) Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a spunge with vinegar, and put *it* upon hyssop,

[1] Or, *wrought.*

[a] Ps. 22. 18.

[b] Ps. 69. 21.

[2] Or, *Clopas.*

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with the priestly tunics. (Comp. the account of Aaron's tunic in Jos. *Ant.* iii. 7, § 4.)

(24) **That the scripture might be fulfilled.**—Comp. Note on Matt. i. 22.

**They parted my raiment among them.**—The quotation is from Ps. xxii. 18, closely following the Greek translation.

(25) Verses 25—27 relate an incident which is found in St. John only.

**Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.**—Better, *Mary the* (*wife*) *of Clopas*, as in margin. This Clopas is usually identified with Alphæus. (Comp. Matt. x. 3, xxvii. 56, and *Introduction to the Gospel according to St. Matthew*, p. xli.) The question arises, Are there three or four women mentioned here?—*i.e.*, Is "Mary the (wife) of Clopas" sister of Mary the mother of our Lord? or does St. John mean by "His mother's sister" an unnamed woman, who may not improbably be his own mother, Salome, whom he nowhere mentions? The question cannot be answered with certainty; but upon the whole, the balance of evidence inclines to the view that we have four persons here mentioned in two pairs: "His mother and His mother's sister; Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene." As early as the second century, the Peshito Syriac version adopted this view, and inserted "and" after the word sister. (Comp. Notes on Matt. xxviii. 1 and Luke xxiv. 18, and especially the *Excursus* on *The brethren of the Lord* in Lightfoot *On Galatians*, pp. 247—282.)

(26) **The disciple standing by, whom he loved.**—Comp. Note on chap. xiii. 23.

**Woman, behold thy son!**—Comp. Note on chap. ii. 4. There were those who were called the "brethren of the Lord" who may seem to us to have been of nearer relationship (comp. Note on Matt. xiii. 55), but He regards whosoever doeth the will of His Father which is in heaven, as "brother and sister and mother." (Comp. Notes on Matt. xii. 46 *et seq.*) He now sees standing by the cross her who. by His death will be left without son as well as without husband, for the silence of the history can only be accounted for on the supposition that Joseph was already dead; and in the tenderness of His love He commits her to the care of him whom He Himself had loved beyond others, because beyond others he could receive His love.

(27) **Behold thy mother!**—The solemn committal is a double one. The loving heart of the disciple should find, as well as give, sympathy and support in the love of the mother. The sympathy in their common loss is to be the source of love for each other.

**And from that hour.**—The words do not necessarily mean, but they certainly may mean, that St. John at once took Mary away from the scene that a mother's heart could hardly bear; but he is himself present (verse 35), and the whole account, brief as it is, is that of an eye-witness.

**Unto his own home.**—Comp. Note on chap. i. 11, and *Introduction*, pp. 369, 371. The word is used in chap. xvi. 32 of the lodging or sojourning place of the Apostles. The meaning here is that whatever was his home became hers.

(28) Comp. accounts of the darkness and death in Matt. xxvii. 45—50; Mark xv. 33—51; Luke xxiii. 44—46.

**Knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled.**—It is difficult to give the exact meaning of the words in English. In the original the words for "accomplished" and "fulfilled" are derived from the same root, and the latter word is not the ordinary formula of quotation which we have had, *e.g.*, in chap. xiii. 18 (see Note there). The Vulgate has "Postea sciens Jesus quia omnia *consummata* sunt ut *consummaretur* Scriptura." Perhaps the nearest English rendering is "that all things were now completed that the Scripture might be accomplished." But then there arises the difficult question, Is this connected with the words which follow, or not? The margin assumes that it is, and refers to Ps. lxix. 21. On the other hand (1) St. John's custom is to quote the fulfilment of Scripture as seen in the event after its occurrence; (2) he does not here use the ordinary words which accompany such a reference; (3) the actual meaning of "knowing that all things were now accomplished" seems to exclude the idea of a further accomplishment, and to refer to the whole life which was an accomplishment of Scripture; (4) the context of words as they occur in the Psalm (verse 22 *et seq.*) cannot be understood of our Lord. There seems to be good reason, therefore, for understanding the words "that the Scripture might be completed," of the events of the whole life, and not of the words which immediately follow.

**I thirst.**—He had refused the usual stupefying drink at the moment of crucifixion (comp. Notes on Matt. xxvii. 34, 48), but now all has been accomplished, the moment of His departure is at hand, and He seeks relief from the physical agony of the thirst caused by His wounds.

(29) **Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar.**—This vessel of the ordinary sour wine drunk by the Roman soldiers, was placed near in order to be given to those who were crucified. Thirst was always an accompaniment of death by crucifixion, and that the vessel of wine was prepared for this purpose is made probable by the mention of the sponge and hyssop. (Comp. Note on Matt. xxvii. 28.)

**And put it upon hyssop.**—This detail is peculiar and put *it* to his mouth. (30) When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

(31) The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. (32) Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. (33) But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: (34) but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. (35) And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record is true:

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to St. John. Bochart (*Hierozoicon,* i. 2, 50) thinks that the plant was marjoram, or some plant like it, and he is borne out by ancient tradition. The stalks, from a foot to a foot and a half high, would be sufficient to reach to the cross. The plant is named in one other passage in the New Testament (Heb. ix. 29), and is frequent in the Greek of the Old Testament. The Hebrew word is *ēzōv*, and the identification must always be uncertain, because we cannot know whether the Greek translation is based upon an identification of the plant, or upon a similarity in the sound of the names.

(30) **It is finished.**—That is (comp. verse 28, and chap. xvii. 4), the work which God had given Him to do. (Comp. Notes on Matt. xxvii. 50, and Luke xxiii. 46.) This word is the expression by Jesus Himself of what St. John had expressed by saying, "Jesus knowing that all things were now finished, that the Scriptures should be fulfilled."

The order of the seven words of the cross will be, (1) "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii. 34); (2) "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise" (Luke xxiii. 43); (3) "Woman, behold thy son," "Behold thy mother" (John xix. 26, 27); (4) "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" (Matt. xxvii. 46, Mark xv. 34); (5) "I thirst" (verse 28); (6) "It is finished" (verse 29); (7) "Into Thy hands I commend My spirit" (Luke xxiii. 46).

**And he bowed his head.**—This reminiscence of the very attitude of the last moments is peculiar to St. John.

**And gave up the ghost.**—Comp. chap. x. 18, and Notes on Matt. xxvii. 50; Mark xv. 37; and Luke xxiii. 46. All the expressions used lay stress on the voluntary action of the death.

(31) The account of the piercing of the side (verses 31—37) is peculiar to St. John.

**The preparation, . . . . an high day.**—Comp. *Excursus F: The Day of the Crucifixion of our Lord,* p. 559. The Roman custom was to allow the bodies to remain on the cross. To the Jews this was defilement (Deut. xxi. 22, 23), against which they were the more anxious to take precaution because the approaching Sabbath was "an high day."

**That their legs might be broken.**—The breaking of the legs by means of clubs was a Roman punishment, known by the name of *crurifragium,* which sometimes accompanied crucifixion, and appears also to have been used as a separate punishment. It is not otherwise clear that its purpose was, or that its effect would be, to cause death, but this is the impression we derive from the present context (verse 33).

(32) **Then came the soldiers, . . . .**—The words do not mean, as they have sometimes been understood, that other soldiers came, but refer to the quaternion before named (verse 23), who had naturally fallen back from the crosses, and are here represented as coming forward to complete their work. The mention of the "first" and the "other" suggests that they formed two pairs, and began on either side breaking the legs of the thieves crucified with Jesus.

(33) **And saw that he was dead already, . . .**—The only explanation of their not breaking the legs of Jesus seems to be that the purpose of the *crurifragium* was to ensure death, or, in any case, prevent the possibility of escape. Crucifixion itself would not necessarily cause death for several days, nor, indeed, at all; but Jesus had by His own will committed His spirit to His Father.

(34) **But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side.**—They had seen that He was dead, and therefore did not break the legs. To cause death was not, then, the object in piercing the side; and yet it may have seemed to make death doubly sure. The word rendered "pierced" occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, but it is certain, from chap. xx. 27, that the act caused a deep wound, and that the point of the lance therefore penetrated to the interior organs of the body. If the soldier stood before the cross, this wound would naturally be in the left side.

**And forthwith came there out blood and water.**—Various physiological explanations have been given of this fact, such as—(1) that the lance pierced the pericardium, which contained a small quantity of watery lymph, which immediately flowed out; and also the heart, from which the blood flowed, the actual death taking place at this moment; (2) that the physical death of Christ resulted from rupture of the heart, and that the cavities of the heart and the surrounding vessels contained a watery fluid; (3) that decomposition of the blood in the corpse had taken place, the solid matter being separated from the fluid, so that it would appear to be blood mixed with water. (Comp. Notes on 1 John v. 5, 6.)

Whatever solution we adopt, it is clear that death had taken place some time previously (verse 30), and that, while we cannot say which physical explanation is the true one, there is within the region of natural occurrences quite sufficient to account for the impression on the mind of St. John which he records here. We have to think of the disciple whom Jesus loved looking at the crucified and pierced body of his Lord, and remembering the picture in later years, and telling that there flowed from that pierced side both blood and water.

(35) **And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true.**—Comp. chap. i. 7. It may be better to render the word here, as elsewhere, by "witness," in order that we may get the full force of its frequent recurrence. The writer speaks of himself in the third person (comp. *Introduction,* p. 375), laying stress upon the specially important fact that it was an eye-witness—

and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. (36) For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.[a] (37) And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.[b]

(38) And after this Joseph of Arimathæa,[c] being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave *him* leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. (39) And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound *weight.* (40) Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. (41) Now in the place where he was crucified there was

[a] Ex. 12. 46; Num. 9. 12; Ps. 34. 20.

[b] Zech. 12. 10.

[c] Matt. 27. 57.

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"he that saw it"—who testified to the fact, and one who therefore knew it to be true. The word rendered "true" in this clause is the emphatic word for "ideally true," which is familiar to the readers of this Gospel. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 9.) It answers to the idea of what evidence should be, because it is the evidence of one who himself saw what he witnesses.

**And he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.**—The witness was ideally true, and therefore the things witnessed were actually true. He cannot doubt this, and he testifies it in order that others may find in these truths ground for, and the confirmation of, their faith.

(36) **For these things were done** (better, *came to pass*), **that the scripture should be fulfilled.**—The emphatic witness of the previous verse is not therefore to be confined to the one fact of the flowing of the blood and the water, but to the facts in which the fulfilment of Scripture was accomplished, and which establish the Messiahship of Jesus.

He saw—that which might have seemed an accidental occurrence—that they brake not the legs of Jesus; he saw—that which might have seemed a sort of instinct of the moment—that the Roman soldier pierced the side of Jesus; he saw in the water and blood which flowed from it visible proof that Jesus was the Son of man; but he saw, too, that these incidents were part of the divine destiny of the Messiah which the prophets had foretold, and that in them the Scripture was fulfilled. (Comp. Note on chap. xiii. 18.)

**A bone of him shall not be broken.**—The reference is, as the margin gives it, to the Paschal Lamb, in which the Baptist had already seen a type of Christ (comp. Note on chap. i. 29), and which St. Paul afterwards more definitely identifies with Him (1 Cor. v. 7). It is not equally apposite to refer to Ps. xxxiv. 20, as the thought there is of preservation in life, but the words of the Psalm are doubtless themselves a poetic adaptation of the words of Exodus.

(37) **They shall look on him whom they pierced.**—The words, as they occur in the Authorised version, of the prophecy are, "They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced," but the reading which St. John has followed is that of many MSS., and is adopted by many Rabbinic (as Rashi and Kimchi) and many modern authorities (as Ewald and Geiger). The Greek translation (LXX.) of the prophet avoided the strong word "pierced," as applied to Jehovah, and substituted for it "insulted." St. John translates the original Hebrew freely for himself (comp. Rev. i. 7), and gives the undoubted meaning of the Hebrew word, translating it by the same Greek word which is used by Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus. He thinks of the prophecy which spoke of Jehovah as pierced by His people, and sees it fulfilled in the Messiah pierced on the cross.

For the fulfilment of the prophecy, comp. Notes on chaps. viii. 28 and xii. 32. Jewish Rabbis, and Greek proselytes, and Roman soldiers alike looked, as they stood before the cross, on Him whom they pierced. That scene is typical. He shall draw all men unto Him, and the moral power over the heart of humanity will be the heart of love, which loves and therefore saves him that has pierced it through and through. "God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

(38) For the burial (verses 38—42), comp. generally Notes on Matt. xxvii. 57—61; Mark xv. 42—47; Luke xxiii. 50—56.

**But secretly for fear of the Jews.**—This is the only additional fact which St. John supplies with regard to Joseph. He places him in these verses side by side with Nicodemus, and ascribes the same trait of character to both.

(39) **Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night.**—He is mentioned only by St. John. (Comp. Notes on chaps. iii. 1, 2, and vii. 50.)

**A mixture of myrrh and aloes.**—For "myrrh," comp. Note on Matt. ii. 11. "Aloes" are not elsewhere mentioned in the New Testament, but they are joined with myrrh in the Messianic Psalm xlv. 8. The aloe is an Eastern odoriferous wood—to be distinguished from the aloes of commerce—and chips of the better kinds are now said to be worth their weight in gold. The myrrh and aloes were probably pulverised and mixed together, and then placed in the linen in which the body was wrapped.

**About an hundred pound weight.**—Comp. Notes on chap. xii. 3 *et seq.* The quantity is clearly much more than could have been placed in the linen which surrounded the body; but the offering was one of love, and part of it may have been placed in the sepulchre. We read of the burial of Asa, that they "laid him in the bed which was filled with sweet odours and divers kinds of spices prepared by the apothecaries' art" (2 Chron. xvi. 14).

(40) **And wound it in linen clothes with the spices.**—Comp. Notes on Luke xxiv. 12. The same word does not occur, but the manner of the Jews to bury has been also illustrated in the Note on chap. xi. 44.

(41) **Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden.**—Comp. chap. xviii. 1. St. John's account makes the choice of the sepulchre depend on its nearness to the place of crucifixion; the account in the earlier Gospels makes it depend on the fact that the sepulchre belonged to Joseph. The one account implies the other; and the burial, under the circumstances, required both that the sepulchre should be at hand, and that its owner should be willing that the body should be placed in it.

a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. (42) There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation *day;* for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

CHAPTER XX.—(1) The first *day* of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early,[a] when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. (2) Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple,[b] whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. (3) Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. (4) So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. (5) And he stooping down, *and looking in,* saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he

*b* ch. 13. 23, and 21. 30.

A.D. 33.

*a* Matt. 28. 1; Mark 16. 1.

**A new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.**—An emphatic combination of the two statements made in Matt. xxvii. 60 and Luke xxiii. 53.

(42) **The Jews' preparation day.**—Comp. verses 14, 31, and *Excursus F: The Day of the Crucifixion of our Lord,* p. 559.

### XX.

[**6. The Climax of Faith. Resurrection and Appearances of Jesus** (chap. xx.).

(1) ST. PETER AND ST. JOHN AT THE EMPTY SEPULCHRE. THEY SEE AND BELIEVE (verses 1—10).

(2) MARY MAGDALENE AT THE SEPULCHRE. THE ANGELS. "RABBONI." CHANGED CONDITIONS OF LIFE (verses 11—18).

(3) THE FIRST APPEARANCE TO THE TEN. PEACE TO THEM AND TO THE WORLD (verses 19—23).

(4) THE APPEARANCE TO THE ELEVEN. "MY LORD AND MY GOD" (verses 24—29).

(5) CLOSE OF THE ORIGINAL GOSPEL AT THIS HIGHEST REACH OF FAITH. ITS OBJECT; LIFE THROUGH BELIEVING (verses 30, 31).]

(1) For the visit of the women to the sepulchre, and their announcement to the disciples (verses 1, 2), comp. generally Notes on Matt. xxviii. 1—4, 8; Mark xvi. 1—4, 8; Luke xxiv. 1—3, 9—11. Each of the three narratives separates the return from the visit by an account of the appearance of the angels at the sepulchre.

**The first day of the week.**—The same phrase occurs in Luke xxiv. 1.

**Cometh Mary Magdalene.**—St. Matthew has, "Mary Magdalene and the other Mary;" St. Mark has, "Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome;" St. Luke has, "The women which had come with Him from Galilee" (xxiii. 55), and enumerates them in xxiv. 10, as "Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and the others with them." St. John speaks of only one of the group, who was specially prominent.

**And seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.**—This fact is made emphatic in all the accounts. See especially Luke xxiv. 2.

(2) **To Simon Peter, and to the other disciple.**—St. Matthew has, "to His disciples;" St. Luke has, "to the Eleven, and to all the rest." St. John relates only that announcement of which he had special personal knowledge.

For "the other disciple" comp. *Introduction,* p. 375. For the connection between St. John and St. Peter, comp. *Introduction,* p. 371.

**Whom Jesus loved.**—Comp. Note on chaps. xi. 3; xxi. 15. The word here used of St. John is that which is used of Lazarus in chap. xi. 3. It is not the word which occurs in chaps. xix. 26, xxi. 7, 20.

**We know not where they have laid him.**—The plural has frequently been pressed to prove that Mary included the other women with herself in what she says—*i.e.,* that St. John's narrative here implies that of the earlier Gospels. This certainly may be so, but we cannot say more than this. It certainly may be that, in her feeling of despair, she speaks generally of the utter hopelessness of human effort, whether her own or that of others. It is the passionate cry of her woman's heart. They have not only crucified the Lord, but have robbed the body of the resting-place which love had provided for it, and of the tender care with which love was seeking to surround it—"They have taken away the Lord; and we know not to what fresh indignity their hatred, against which even the grave is not proof, has subjected the body of Him whom we have loved. We know not where they have laid Him."

(3) The details of the visit of Peter and John (verses 3—10) are peculiar to this Gospel. St. Luke mentions the visit of Peter only (xxiv. 12, but comp. verse 23); but here we have the whole scene pictured with all the vividness and exactness of one who stated what he himself saw and took part in.

**Peter therefore went forth, and . . . came to the sepulchre.**—In the original there is a change of tense here; the latter verb expressing the continuance of the journey towards the sepulchre.

(4) **So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter.**—This is simply the result of the greater activity of John, who was probably younger than his companion. The thought that love outran doubt or fear, which has often been connected with the words, is not in harmony with the context, for "Peter therefore went forth" as soon as he heard Mary's words (verse 3); and Peter it was who first entered into the sepulchre (verse 6).

(5) **And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying.**—Better, . . . *seeth the linen clothes lying.* The tense still describes the scene as it actually occurred. The words "looking in" rightly complete the meaning. (Comp. Note on chap. xi. 38, and for the word, Note on Luke xxiv. 12.) It is used again in the New Testament only in verse 11, Jas. i. 25, and 1 Pet. i. 12. It meant, originally, to stoop sideways, and was used, *e.g.,* of a harp-player; then, to stoop over, peer into, inquire into. For the "linen clothes," comp. xix. 40.

**Yet went he not in.**—He is restrained by wonder, not unaccompanied, perhaps, by fear, at what he sees, and waits for his friend and companion.

not in. (6) Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, (7) and the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. (8) Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. (9) For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. (10) Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

(11) But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, *and looked* into the sepulchre, (12) and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. (13) And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because

(6) **And went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie.**—Better, . . . *beholdeth the linen clothes lie.* The word is not the same as that in verse 5, but expresses the close observation of the linen clothes by St. Peter, while St. John did but see them from without.

(7) **And the napkin, that was about his head.**—Comp. Note on chap. xi. 44.

**Not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together . .**—This was not seen from without (verse 5), but was in a separate place, perhaps on the inner side of the sepulchre. In this description and in this verse the minute knowledge and remembrance of an eye-witness reaches its climax. The very fact that the napkin was folded did not escape the writer's eye, nor fade from his memory.

**Then went in also that other disciple . . .**—If the vivid details of this picture impress us with the fact that we are in the presence of an eye-witness, none the less do the traits of character remind us of all that we know from other sources of the actors in the scene. The bold impetuosity of St. Peter, and the gentle reverence of St. John, are represented in him who quickly entered into the sepulchre, and in him who stood gazing into it, and afterwards went in. He went in, "therefore," as the original exactly means, because he heard from Peter of what he had seen.

**And he saw, and believed.**—The gentler character was also the more receptive, and this appears to be intimated in this verse. Nothing is said of St. Peter's faith, but St. John seems to unveil for us the inner history of his own spiritual life. The word for "see" is different from either of those used before in verses 5 and 6. (Comp. Luke x. 13.) It is not that he saw, as from a distance, nor yet that he beheld that which was immediately presented to the gaze; it is not that he saw in any merely physical sense, but that he saw with the eye of the mind, and grasped the truth which lay beneath the phenomena around him. He saw, and he who had believed before, found in this fact the stepping-stone to a higher faith. (Comp. Note on chap. ii. 11.)

(9) **For as yet they knew not the scripture.**—This explains in what sense it was that St. John now believed. Up to this time they knew not the meaning of the Scripture which foretold the Resurrection; but from that moment at least they recognised in the fact of the absent body of Christ the truth that He must rise again. (Comp. Notes on chap. ii. 21, 22.)

**That he must rise again from the dead.**—Comp. especially Notes on Luke xxiv. 26, 44.

(10) **Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.**—More exactly, of course, *to their lodgings in Jerusalem.* They had accomplished the object of their visit to the sepulchre. One, at least, had realised, and he must have told his thoughts to his friend, that the Lord was not to be looked for in the empty grave, and that Mary's fears (verse 2) were groundless. No enemies had taken the body away. They return, then, with hearts filled with this truth, to ponder over its meaning, or to tell it to others of the Eleven, or to wonder and to wait until He should come again to them, as He had promised.

(11) **But Mary stood** (better, *was standing*) **without at the sepulchre weeping.**—She had before gone back as soon as she saw that the stone was taken away (verses 1 and 2), and had told the two disciples of what she found. She was left behind by them in their haste to reach the sepulchre, but has followed them, and now that they have returned with the joy of a new and fuller faith, she remains without the sepulchre, not venturing to enter, and giving vent in tears to the sorrow that weighs upon her heart.

**She stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre.**—Comp. Note on verse 5.

(12) **And seeth two angels in white sitting.**—Comp. generally on the vision of angels, Notes on Matt. xxviii. 5—7; Mark xvi. 5—7; Luke xxiv. 4—8. This is to be regarded as a distinct vision to Mary, which, from the fulness with which it is recorded, we must suppose that she herself related to the Evangelist. (Comp. *Introduction*, p. 379.) It rests, therefore, upon her testimony, and as a vision to her only may seem to be less certainly objective than the other appearances. Great caution is, however, necessary in estimating the truth of that which is wholly beyond the application of our ordinary canons of evidence. If we admit the earlier vision of angels, of which there were several witnesses, there can be no reason for rejecting this; and if the evidence was at the time sufficient to convince the Evangelist, who himself had seen no such vision, but was guided by the Spirit to accept and record this, as seen by Mary, we have a decisive judgment of higher authority than any which criticism can attain.

With the words "in white" we are, of course, to understand raiment. The ellipsis is frequent in the classic, and indeed in all writers.

**The one at the head, and the other at the feet.**—The idea is apparently that of sitting and watching the body. She had feared that some outrage had been wrought upon the body; but God had given His angels charge concerning Him.

(13) **And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou?**—Comp. Matt. xxviii. 5.

**Because they have taken away my Lord.**—The passionate feeling of verse 2 still has entire possession of her mind. It is now more fervent, for she is not addressing her own friends and the Lord's disciples: "They have taken away *my* Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." (Comp.

they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. (14) And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. (15) Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. (16) Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. (17) Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend

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Note on the plural, "we know not," in verse 2.) She is here alone, speaking to strangers, and may, therefore, have used the singular, whether she went in the early morning with other women or not.

(14) **And saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.**—There is no need to imagine an external cause for her turning round, and if there was one it is useless for us to ask what it was. She has expressed her woe, and turns aside again to weep, when she sees another form. Weighed down by her sorrow, not looking intently, it may be, or seeing indistinctly through tear-filled eyes, she does not recognise her Lord. We know not what the appearance was. Figure, feature, clothing, there must have been; but these differing, in this as in other manifestations, from those with which they had been familiar. She, perhaps, hardly looked at all, but supposed that the only person there at that early hour would be the keeper of the garden.

(15) **Sir, if thou have borne him hence . . .**—The word rendered "Sir" is generally a mark of respect, but like the corresponding word in most languages, was also used to a stranger, and even to an inferior. The "gardener," moreover, corresponded more to what we should call a "bailiff." He would have been a servant of Joseph of Arimathæa, and as such may have become known to Mary at the time of embalming. She says, with emphasis, "If *thou* hast borne Him hence;" turning away from the angels to address him. The word rendered "borne" here means properly "to bear," and then "bear away," "remove," and then "remove secretly." (Comp. chap. xii. 6.) Of this last meaning there are many undoubted examples in Josephus, and this seems clearly to be the thought here.

**Tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.**—Three times she refers to the Lord simply by the pronoun "Him." She has named Him in the previous verse, and perhaps thinks that the gardener had heard those words; but the impression formed from her eager words is that her own mind is so entirely filled with the one subject, that she supposes it to be in the minds of others. The same passionate eagerness is heard in the words which follow. Devotion such as hers does not weigh difficulties. A place of safety for that sacred body is the object of her will; and that will neither dreads danger nor sees that the task would be physically impossible, but asserts in the confidence of its own strength, "and *I* will take Him away."

(16) **Jesus saith unto her, Mary.**—It is to that devoted love that the first words of the risen Lord are spoken. He who knew her whole past, and knew that her devotion to Him had sprung from the freedom from the thraldom of evil which He had wrought for her, is near to that woman weeping by the grave-side, while Apostles, even the true-hearted Peter and the loving John, have gone to their own homes. The voice of God is always most quickly heard by the hearts that love Him; the presence of God is never so truly felt as in the utter helplessness of human woe.

**Saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.**—The better reading is, *saith unto Him in Hebrew, Rabboni . . .*—Comp. Notes on chap. xix. 13, and on Mark x. 51, which is the only other passage in the New Testament where "Rabboni" occurs. She had heard in the well-known voice her own name, and it has brought back to her all the old associations. It is the "Master," or, as the Hebrew word means, "*My* Master," and she falls at His feet to embrace Him.

(17) **Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father.**—The probable explanation of these words is to be found in the fact that she had cast herself at His feet with the customary reverential embrace of the knees, and perhaps to make doubly sure the fact that it was the Lord's body, and that His words are meant to prevent this. The words themselves must be carefully considered. "Touch" represents a Greek word which means to "cling to," to "fasten on," to "grasp" an object. The tense is present, and the prohibition is, therefore, not of an individual act, but of a continuance of the act, of the habit, "Do not continue clinging to Me." Her act supposed a condition which had not yet been accomplished. He had not returned to earth to abide permanently with His disciples in the presence of the Paraclete (comp. chap. xiv. 8), for He had not yet ascended to the Father. There should come a permanent closeness of union in His presence in the soul; but then the spirit which her act was manifesting was one which would prevent this presence. The coming of the Paraclete depended upon His going to the Father (comp. chap. xvi. 7), but she would cling to a visible presence, and has not learnt the truth so hard to learn, "It is expedient for you that I go away" (chap. xvi. 7.)

**But go to my brethren, and say unto them.**—Comp. Notes on Matt. xxviii. 10, and on chap. xv. 15. There is a special force in the word "brethren" as spoken by the risen Lord, in that it declares the continuance of His human nature. (See Heb. ii. 11.)

**I ascend unto my Father, and your Father.**—The present is used of the future, which He regards as immediately at hand. The message to the brethren is an assurance that the going to the Father, of which He had so often spoken to them, was about to be realised. The victory over death has been accomplished. This appearance on earth is an earnest of the return to heaven. "Unto My Father," He now says, "and your Father." It is a more emphatic expression than "our Father" would have been. "I ascend unto My Father. Because He is My Father, He is also your Father, and you are My brethren. My victory over death was the victory of man, whose nature has in Me conquered death. My ascension into heaven will be the ascension of human nature, which in Me goes to the Father."

unto my Father, and your Father; and *to* my God, and your God. (18) Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and *that* he had spoken these things unto her.

(19) Then the same day at evening,[a] being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you. (20) And when he had so said, he shewed unto them *his* hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. (21) Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be* unto you: as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you. (22) And when he had

[a] Mark 16. 14.

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**My God, and your God.**—This phrase contains the same fulness of meaning, and adds the special thought of the continuity of the human nature of our Lord, which has already appeared in the word "brethren." (See Note above.)

(18) **Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples.**—Better, *Mary Magdalene cometh, and announceth to the disciples.* The coming is described from the point of view of the writer, who was one of the disciples.

(19) For this appearance to the disciples (verses 19—25) comp. Notes on Mark xvi. 14 and Luke xxiv. 36—43. Between the last verse and this we must suppose to occur the bribing of the guard (Matt. xxviii. 11—15), and the conversation on the way to Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 13—35; see also Mark xvi. 12, 13, and comp. *Chronological Harmony of the Gospels*, p. xxxv.)

**When the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled . . .**—This fact is noted here and in verse 26, and the obvious intention is to point out that the appearance was preternatural. The body of the risen Lord was indeed the body of His human life, but it was not subject to the ordinary conditions of human life. The power that had upheld it as He walked upon the Sea of Galilee (chap. vi. 16—21) made it during those forty days independent of laws of gravitation and of material resistance. (Comp. Notes on Luke xxiv. 15, 16, 31, 39.) The supposition that the doors were shut, and were miraculously opened (comp. Acts xii. 46), is opposed to the general impression of the context, and the incident is one which would probably have been mentioned.

The "fear of the Jews" naturally followed the Crucifixion. The Shepherd was struck, and the flock was scattered. They would remember, too, His own words, which foretold persecution for them (chap. xv. 18 *et seq.*), and there may have been definite charges against some of them. Peter, *e.g.*, had drawn upon himself the hostility of the high priest's household, and John was known to be among the disciples. (Comp. chap. xviii. 8, 25 *et seq.*)

**Peace be unto you.**—The salutation is given also in Luke xxiv. 36. (Comp., in this Gospel, Note on chap. xiv. 27.) The well-known words of greeting would come to them now, as her own name came to Mary (verse 16), bringing, as the familiar tones fell upon the ear, the assurance of the Master's presence in their midst. But the words would also have the fuller meaning of a message from the spirit-world to them. It is a voice from the darkness beyond the grave into which the living have tried in vain to see, and that voice is one of peace. It is the message of the conqueror of death to man who has conquered in and through Him, declaring that the victory is won. It is the message of at-one-ment, declaring the peace which flows from pardoned sin and reconciliation with God to the disciples themselves, and through them, as the apostles of peace, to all mankind.

(20) **He shewed unto them his hands and his side.**—In St. Luke's account (xxiv. 39) we have "hands and feet." The piercing of the side is related by St. John only. (Comp. verses 25—27.)

**Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.**—Better, *the disciples therefore were glad . . .* Their joy arose from the proof of corporeal identity which He had given them in the wounds. Their first impression was that they saw a spirit, and they were afraid, but the conviction that it was indeed the Lord, filled them with joy. (Comp. chap. vi. 19—21, and Luke xxiv. 37, 41.)

(21) **Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you.**—These words may be here a solemn repetition of the greeting in verse 19, by which our Lord's own message of peace is immediately connected with that which the Apostles were to deliver to the world. It is, however, more natural to understand the words in verse 19 as those of greeting, and these as words of farewell. (Comp. chap. xiv. 27.) Other words had intervened, as we know from St. Luke's narrative. He is now about to withdraw the evidence of His presence from them, and does so with the customary "*Shalōm;*" but with this He reminds them of the apostleship to which He has called them, gives them an earnest of the Presence which will never leave them, but always qualify them for it (verse 22), and places before them the greatness of the work to which He sends them (verse 23).

**As my** (better, *the*) **Father hath sent me, even so send I you.**—Comp. Note on chap. xvii. 18, where the words occur in prayer to the Father. As spoken here to the disciples they are the identification of them with Himself in His mediatorial work. He is the great Apostle (Heb. iii. 1); they are ambassadors for Christ, to whom He commits the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. v. 18 *et seq.*). He stands in the same relation to the Father as that in which they stand to Him. He declares to them, and they in His name are to declare to the world, the fulness of the Father's love, and the peace between man and God, witnessed to in His life and death. He and they stand also in the same relation to the world. At this very moment they are assembled with shut doors, for fear of the Jews, who are triumphing over Him as dead. But to that world, which will hate, persecute, and kill them, as it had hated, persecuted, and killed Him, they are sent as He was sent; they are to declare forgiveness, mercy, love, peace, as He had declared them, to every heart that does not harden itself against them; and they are to find in His presence, as He had ever found in the Father's presence, the support which will ever bring peace to their own hearts (chap. xiv. 27).

**And when he had said this, he breathed on them.**—The word rendered "breathed" occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, but was familiar from its use in the Greek (LXX.) of Gen. ii. 7. St. John uses to describe this act of the risen Lord the said this, he breathed on *them,* and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: (23) Whose soever sins ye remit,[a] they are remitted unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained.

(24) But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. (25) The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

(26) And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with

[a] Matt. 18. 18.

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striking word which had been used to describe the act by which God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life. He writes as one who remembered how the influence of that moment on their future lives was a new spiritual creation, by which they were called, as it were, out of death into life. It was the first step in that great moral change which passed over the disciples after the Crucifixion, and of which the day of Pentecost witnessed the accomplishment.

**And saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.**—These words are not, on the one hand, to be understood as simply a promise of the future gift of the Holy Ghost, for they are a definite imperative, referring to the moment when they were spoken; nor are they, on the other hand, to be taken as the promised advent of the Paraclete (chap. xiv. 16 *et seq.*), for the gift of the Holy Ghost was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified (chaps. vii. 39, xvi. 7 *et seq.*). The meaning is that He then gave to them a sign, which was itself to faithful hearts as the firstfruits of that which was to come. His act was sacramental, and with the outer and visible sign there was the inward and spiritual grace. The very word used was that used when He said to them, "Take (*receive ye*), eat; this is My body" (Matt. xxvi. 26; Mark xiv. 22). It would come to them now with a fulness of sacred meaning. The Risen Body is present with them. The constant spiritual Presence in the person of the Paraclete is promised to them. They again hear the words "Receive ye," and the very command implies the power to obey. (Comp. *Excursus C: The Sacramental Teaching of St. John's Gospel,* p. 556.)

(23) **Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them . . .**—Comp. for the "power of the keys," the Notes on Matt. xvi. 19, and xviii. 18. Assuming what has there been said, it will be sufficient to add that this power is here immediately connected with the representative character of the disciples as apostles sent by Christ, as He was Himself sent by the Father (verse 21), and that its validity is dependent upon their reception of the Holy Ghost (verse 22), by whom Christ Himself is present in them (chaps. xiv. 18, xvi. 7—11). Sent as He was sent, they are not sent to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved; but in their work, as in His, men are condemned because the light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light.

The ultimate principles upon which this power rests are those stated above—the being sent by Christ, and the reception of the Holy Ghost. God has promised forgiveness wherever there is repentance; He has not promised repentance wherever there is sin. It results from every declaration of forgiveness made in the name of the Father through Jesus Christ, that hearts which in penitence accept it receive remission of their sins, and that the hardness of the hearts which wilfully reject it is by their rejection increased, and the very words by which their sins would be remitted become the words by which they are retained. (Comp. especially Notes on chap. iii. 17 *et seq.;* xvi. 8 *et seq.;* and 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.)

On individual words in this verse it is important to note that in the better text the tense of that rendered "are remitted" is a strict present, while that rendered "are retained" is in the perfect-present. The difference is not easy to preserve in English, but the thought seems to be, "Whose soever sins ye remit—a change in their condition is taking place—their sins are being remitted by God; whose soever ye retain—their condition remains unchanged—they have been, and are retained."

(24) **But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus . . .**—Comp. Notes on chaps. xi. 16 and xiv. 5. It is in harmony with the desponding character that looks upon the visit to Jerusalem as necessarily leading to death, that he now is as one who has given up the common hope of the band of disciples, and is not present with them. It has happened as he had thought; the death he had foretold has come to pass. Is this the end of all the Messianic hopes which he had cherished? Is the grave the "whither," and the cross the "way," which they knew not?

(25) **Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails.**—This demand for the evidence of his own senses, and refusal to admit the testimony of eye-witnesses, though these were the whole of his ten brethren in the Apostolic band, remind us of the demand made to Christ Himself, "We know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way?"

The reading of the second clause varies between "print of the nails" and "place of the nails." The Greek words vary by only one letter (τύπος, "print"; τόπος, "place"), so that copyists may easily have taken one for the other. If we read "place," it answers to the touch of the finger, as "print" does to the sight of the eye; but, on the other hand, there is in the repetition an expression of determination, almost, we may say, amounting to obstinacy, which corresponds with the position which Thomas is taking.

**And thrust my hand into his side.**—Comp. verse 20. The feet are not mentioned, but the hands and the side would be demonstrative evidence. We cannot properly infer from this verse that the feet were not nailed.

**I will not believe.**—The determination is expressed in its strongest form by the double Greek negative, "I will by no means believe."

(26) **And after eight days again his disciples were within.**—That is, on the octave of the first appearance to them; as we should now say, on the first Sunday after Easter. There is no reason for thinking that they had not met together during the interval, and that their meeting was a special observance of the Lord's Day. At the same time this appearance on the recurrence of the first day of the week would take its place among the steps by which the disciples passed from the observance of the Jewish Sabbath to that of the Christian Sunday.

them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you. (27) Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. (28) And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. (29) Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed.

(30) And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples,[a] which are not written in this book: (31) but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son

[a] ch. 21. 25.

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The place is obviously the same as that of the first appearance, and the doors are shut for the same reason. (Comp. Note on verse 20.)

The repetition of the greeting, "Peace be unto you," is partly the natural salutation as He appears to them, but now indeed full of a new meaning, which the thoughts of the week must have written upon their hearts, and partly, it may be, is specially intended to include Thomas, who was not present when it was spoken before.

(27) **Then saith he to Thomas . . .**—This implies a knowledge of the words of verse 25, which in itself would carry conviction to the mind of Thomas. This repetition must have carried with this conviction a sense of shame at his unbelief.

**And be not faithless, but believing.**—Better, *and become not unbelieving, but believing.* The words do not apply to the fact of the Resurrection only, but to the general spiritual condition of the Apostle. He was in danger of passing from the state of a believer in Christ to that of an unbeliever. His demand for the evidence of the senses was a step backward, a resting on the less, not on the more, certain. His Master would have him retrace that step, and become one who rests upon the intuition of the Spirit.

(28) **Thomas answered and said unto him.**—It is implied that he did not make use of the tests which his Master offered him, but that he at once expressed the fulness of his conviction. This is confirmed by the words of the next verse, "Because thou hast seen Me."

**My Lord and my God.**—These words are preceded by "said unto him," and are followed by "because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed;" and the words "my Lord" can only be referred to Christ. (Comp. verse 13.) The sentence cannot therefore, without violence to the context, be taken as an exclamation addressed to God, and is to be understood in the natural meaning of a confession by the Apostle that his Lord was also God.

(29) **Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed.**—The name "Thomas" is omitted in all the better MSS., and the order of the other words suggests that they should be read interrogatively—*Jesus saith unto him, Because thou hast seen Me, hast thou believed?* The tense of the word rendered "hast thou believed" is the perfect-present—"hast thou become, and art thou a believer?" The command of verse 27 had done its work, and the words are words of approval; but yet they are not wholly so. He had arrived at conviction by means of the senses, but the higher blessedness was that of those who see by the eye of the spirit and not by that of the body; who base their confidence on the conviction of the faith-faculty, and are independent of the changing phenomena of the senses.

**Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.**—The truth is expressed in its general form. It is not to be understood in any special sense of the Ten, for the Greek is against it, and the other disciples also had seen and had believed; but it includes all who have become believers without having seen. This blessedness is thought of as existing from the moment of believing, and the act of faith is therefore spoken of in the past tense. The words look forward to the development of the Church which is to be founded upon Apostolic witness, and whose faith must ever be in the unseen. (Comp. Notes on chap. i. 9 and 1 Pet. i. 9.)

(30) **And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples.**—More exactly, *Yea, and indeed many and other signs did Jesus.* (Comp. Note on chap. ii. 11.) We must understand the "signs" not of the proofs of the Resurrection only, but of the works wrought during the whole life. The writer's narrative is drawing to a close, and he explains the fact that he has recorded so little of a life which contained so much. There were, indeed, many other signs which he, as an eye-witness, remembered, but which it was not within his purpose to relate.

That he refers to the whole work of Christ, and not to the Risen Life only, is clear, because (1) there were not "many other signs" during the forty days; (2) the words "did Jesus" are not applicable to the manifestation to the disciples; (3) the words "in this book" refer to all that has preceded.

It would seem to follow from this that these verses (30 and 31) are the conclusion of the original Gospel, and that chap. xxi. is to be regarded as a postscript or appendix. We shall find reason for believing that, though an appendix, it proceeded from the hand of the Apostle himself.

(31) **But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.**—We have here the writer's own statement of his object in writing his narrative, and also the explanation of what seems an abrupt end. His object is that those for whom he writes may become believers, and read in these signs the spiritual truths which lay behind them. He has traced step by step the developments of faith in the Apostles themselves, and this has reached its highest stage in the confession of Thomas. He has recorded the blessedness of those who shall believe without sight, uttered in his Master's words. In the confession of Thomas, and in the comment of our Lord, the object of the author finds its full expression, and with their words the Gospel finds its fitting close. "Become not faithless, but believing;" "My Lord and my God;" "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed"—these are the words the author heard and records. "But these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." This is the object he had in recording them. On the special meaning of these words as connected with the Gnostic heresies of the time, comp. *Introduction*, p. 378.

of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

CHAPTER XXI.—(1) After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he *himself*. (2) There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the *sons* of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. (3) Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing. (4) But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. (5) Then Jesus saith unto them, Children,[1] have

A.D. 33.

[1] Or, *Sirs.*

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**And that believing ye might have life through his name.**—Better, . . . *in His name.* Thus the last words bring us back again to the first. (Comp. Notes on chap. i. 4, 12.)

## XXI.

[**7. The Epilogue to the Gospel. The Link between the Past and the Future** (chap. xxi.).

(1) THE DRAUGHT OF FISHES (verses 1—8).
(2) THE BREAKFAST. THE THIRD MANIFESTATION OF JESUS TO THE DISCIPLES (verses 9—14).
(3) THE TEST AND THE COMMISSION. ST. PETER AND ST. JOHN (verses 15—23).
(4) THE CLOSE OF THE GOSPEL. CORROBORATIVE WITNESS TO ITS TRUTH:
  (*a*) *By fellow disciples* (verse 24);
  (*b*) *By an amanuensis* (verse 25).]

(1) **After these things.**—Comp. the same expression in chaps. v. 1, vi. 1, and vii. 1. It denotes not immediate succession, but rather an interval during which other events have taken place. Here it connects the events of this chapter with the Gospel which has been brought to a conclusion in chap. xx. 30, 31. At a later period than the last-mentioned there, occurred the events to be mentioned here.

**Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples.**—Better, *He manifested Himself again to the disciples.* The word "Jesus" is of uncertain authority, and has probably been inserted because a Church Lesson began at this place. (Comp. Notes on chap. vi. 14.) The pronoun connects the narrative immediately with that which has gone before.

The word rendered "shewed Himself" (*manifested Himself*) is used elsewhere of our Lord's appearance only in Mark xvi. 12, 14, where it is passive (see Note there), and in verse 14 of this chapter. The argument that this chapter is not the original part of St. John's Gospel cannot, however, be fairly said to be strengthened by this fact. The word occurs only once besides in the Synoptic Gospels (Mark iv. 32), while it is distinctly a Johannine word (chaps. i. 31; ii. 11; iii. 21; vii. 4; ix. 3; xvii. 6; 1 John i. 2 (twice); ii. 19, 28; iii. 2 (twice), 5, 8; iv. 9; Rev. iii. 18; xv. 4).

The reflective expression, "manifested Himself," is, moreover, in St. John's style. (Comp. chaps. vii. 4 and xi. 33.) The word "again" is another link with what has gone before, connecting this manifestation with that of chap. xx. 19, 26.

**At the sea of Tiberias.**—Comp. Note on chap. vi. 1. The name is found only in St. John.

(2) **There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus.**—It is most probable that we have here the names of all in the group of seven who were Apostles, and that the two unnamed persons were disciples in the wider sense in which the word is often used by St. John (chaps. vi. 60, 66; vii. 3; viii. 31; xviii. 19). If they were Andrew and Philip, which has been supposed from chap. i. 40, 43, it is not easy to understand their position in the list, or the absence of their names.

**Thomas** is not named by the other Evangelists, except in the lists of the Apostles. (Comp. chaps. xi. 16; xiv. 5; xx. 24 *et seq.*)

**Nathanael** is named only by St. John. (Comp. Notes on chap. i. 45 *et seq.*) He is probably to be identified with the "Bartholomew" of the earlier Gospels; this latter name being a patronymic. (Comp. Note on Matt. x. 3, 4.) The descriptive note "of Cana in Galilee" is added here only.

**The sons of Zebedee** are not elsewhere given by St. John as a description of himself and his brother, but this is the only place in which he names himself and his brother in a list with others. In St. Luke's account of the earlier draught of fishes, the "sons of Zebedee" are named as partners with "Simon" (chap. v. 10). Their position here agrees with the Johannine authorship of the chapter. In the lists in the other Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles, James and John are uniformly prominent in the first group.

(3) **Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing.**—The words are the vivid representation by an ear-witness of what actually took place as they returned to their ordinary work during the interval between the Passover and Pentecost. It does not express either an abandonment of their higher vocation, or an expectation of the presence of the Lord. The picturesque colouring of the whole scene is quite in St. John's style, as is also the simple co-ordinate arrangement of sentences without connecting particles.

**And that night they caught nothing.**—Comp. for the fact Luke v. 5; but the words are different. The word here rendered "caught" occurs nowhere in the other Gospels, but is found again in this chapter (verse 10), and six times in the earlier chapters of the Gospel (vii. 30, 32, 44; vii. 20; x. 39; xi. 57). It occurs also in Rev. xix. 20.

(4) **Jesus stood on the shore.**—Comp. chap. xx. 19, 26. The words express the sudden appearance without any indication of His coming. He was then standing in the midst, or on the shore, but no one knew whence or how.

**The disciples knew not that it was Jesus.**—Comp. chap. xx. 14.

(5) **Children, have ye any meat?**—The word rendered "Children" (or, as the margin has it, *Sirs*), is used in addressing others only by St. John among the New Testament writers (1 John ii. 14 and 18). It is not the word used in chap. xiii. 33, where we have an expression denoting His affectionate tenderness for the disciples, which would not have been appropriate here, for He does not at once reveal His identity to

ye any meat? They answered him, No. (6) And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. (7) Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt *his* fisher's coat *unto him*, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea. (8) And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes. (9) As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. (10) Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. (11) Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an

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them. It is a word which, indeed, may express His love for them (comp. chap. iv. 49), but which appears also to have been used as an address to workmen or inferiors, not unlike our own words "boys" or "lads." They seem to take it in this sense, as though some traveller passing by asked the question because he wished to purchase some of their fish.

The word rendered "meat" occurs here only in the New Testament. It means anything eaten with bread, and was used as equivalent to the fish which was the ordinary relish. (Comp. Note on chap. vi. 9.)

(6) **Cast the net on the right side of the ship.**—Comp. Note on Luke v. 6. Here the special direction is to cast the net on the right side. We must suppose that the net was cast on the left side, and that they think the speaker who stands on the shore sees some indication of fishes on the other side, for He is still as a stranger to them, and yet they at once obey Him.

**They were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.**—That is, they were not able to draw it up into the boat. In verse 8 they are described as dragging it to the shore.

(7) **Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter.**—Comp. *Introduction*, p 375. The traits of character which have before met us are exactly preserved here. John, true to the life of contemplation, is first to trace in the present draught of fishes an analogy with the earlier one, and to discern that the Master who spoke then is present now. Peter, true to the life of action, is first to rush into that Master's presence when he is told that it is the Lord.

**He girt his fisher's coat unto him (for he was naked).**—That is, as the words in the original clearly imply, he put on, and girded round his body the garment which workmen customarily used. This seems to have been a kind of linen frock worn over the shirt, and the Talmud has adopted the Greek word here used to express it. The word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, and the rendering "fisher's coat" probably gives a correct idea of what is meant.

The common usage of the Greek and Hebrew words answering to the English word "naked," makes it probable that St. Peter was wearing some under-garment, and that reverence for the Lord, into whose presence he is about to go, led him to add to this the outer frock. (Comp. Acts xix. 12.)

(8) **And the other disciples came in a little ship.**—Better, . . . . *in the boat.* The two words "ship" and "boat" (πλοῖον and πλοιάριον) are interchanged here, as in chap. vi. 17 *et seq.*

**For they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits.**—That is, about 100 English yards. The shortness of the distance explains how they were able to drag the net in tow. The Greek preposition used with "cubits" (literally, "two hundred cubits *off*") is used of distance only by St. John (chap. xi. 18 and Rev. xiv. 20).

**Dragging the net with fishes.**—Comp. Note on verse 6. The Greek is more exactly, . . . . *with the* (literally, *of the*) *fishes*—*i.e.*, those with which the net had been filled (verse 6).

(9) **They saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.**—In the original the tenses are present, describing the scene as it was impressed on the mind of the writer. *They saw a fire of coals and fish lying thereon, and bread*, or, perhaps, . . . . *and a fish lying thereon, and a loaf.*

For "fire of coals" comp. Note on chap. xviii. 18.

For the word rendered "fish," comp. verses 10 and 13, and Notes on chap. vi. 9 and 11. In this passage and in verse 13 only it occurs in the singular, but it seems clear that it may be collective, as our word "fish."

(10) **Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.**—Comp. Note on last verse. It is implied that they did so, and thus furnished part of the meal of which they are about to partake.

(11) **Simon Peter went up.**—The better reading inserts "therefore": *Simon Peter therefore went up* —*i.e*, because of Christ's command. He went up into the ship now lying on the shore with one end of the net fastened to it, and drew the remainder of the net to the shore.

**Full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three.**—The greatness and the number are dwelt upon because in any ordinary haul of fish a large proportion would be small and valueless, and be cast into the lake again (Comp. Matt. xiii. 47 *et seq.*). These were all "great," and their size and number led to an exact account being taken of them. This would be talked of among the Apostles and their friends and fellow-craftsmen, and is, with the picturesque exactness which is characteristic of St. John, recorded here.

We have no clue to any mystical interpretation of this number, and it is probably not intended to convey one. The various meanings which men have read into it, such as that it represents one of every kind of fish known to the natural history of the day; or that one hundred represents the Gentile nations, fifty the Jews, and three the Trinity; or that there is a reference to the 153,600 proselytes of 2 Chron. ii. 17; or that it expresses symbolically the name of Simon Peter, take their place among the eccentricities of exegesis from which even the latest results of criticism are not free. Still, as all the more spiritual interpreters, from St. Augustine downwards, have seen, the differences between this and the earlier miracle (Luke v. 1—11) are too striking to be hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

(12) Jesus saith unto them, Come *and* dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. (13) Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise. (14) This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

(15) So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. (16) He saith to him again the second time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith

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unintentional. That represents the visible Church, containing good and bad; the net is cast without special direction as to side; the net was broken and many escaped. This represents God's elect, foreknown by Him; all are good; the net is brought to shore, and none are lost. (See Notes on the parable of the Drawnet in Matt. xiii. 47—50, and comp. especially Trench, *Notes on Miracles*, §§ 3 and 33.)

**Yet was not the net broken.**—Comp. Note on Luke v. 6. This is again one of the details which point to an eye-witness as the writer.

(12) **Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine.**—Comp. Note on verse 15 and Luke xi. 37, which are the only other instances of the verb in the New Testament. The meal referred to was the early morning meal which we call breakfast (verse 4).

**And none of the disciples durst ask him . . .**—Comp. chap. iv. 27. They approach Him in reverent silence. Knowing it is the Lord, they yet desire the assurance in His own words, and still they do not dare to ask, "Who art thou?" The Greek word rendered "ask" means to "prove," "inquire." It is found elsewhere in the New Testament in Matt. ii. 8 and x. 11 only. The word rendered "durst," is also not found again in St. John, but its use in the Gospels is—except in the instance of Nicodemus, "who went in boldly unto Pilate" (Mark xv. 43)—confined to the expression of the reverence which dared not question our Lord. (Comp. Matt. xxii. 46; Mark xii. 34; Luke xx. 40.) In all these instances it is used with a negative, and with a verb of inquiry, as here.

(13) **Jesus then cometh**—*i.e.*, from the place where they had seen Him to the "fire of coals."

**And taketh bread, and giveth them.**—Better, . . . *the bread*—*i.e.*, the bread of verse 9. Again (comp. chap. xx. 22) we are reminded of the words used at the Last Supper. (Comp. Note on Luke xxiv. 30.)

**And fish likewise.**—Better, *and the fish likewise*—*i.e.*, the fishes of verses 9 and 10.

(14) **This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples.**—Better, . . . *that Jesus was manifested* . . .—Comp. Note on verse 1. The writer is giving his own witness. He passes over, therefore, the appearances to Mary Magdalene and others, and counting only those "to the disciples"—to the Ten on the first Easter day, and to the Eleven on its octave—gives this appearance as the third. (Comp. Note on 1 Cor. xv. 5—7.)

(15) **Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas.**—The better text here and in verses 16 and 17, is. *Simon, son of John.* The contrast of the name by which the Evangelist denotes, and with that by which the Lord addresses Peter, at once strikes us as significant, and the more so because it comes in a context containing several significant verbal contrasts. Our Lord's words would seem to address him as one who had fallen from the steadfastness of the Rock-man, and had been true rather to his natural than to his apostolic name. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 42, and Matt. xvi. 17.)

**Lovest thou me more than these?**—*i.e.*, than these disciples who are present here with thee. It seems unnecessary to add this explanation, but not a few English notes on this verse explain the word "these" of the fishes, or of the boats and nets, as though the question was, "Lovest thou Me more than thy worldly calling? Art thou willing to give up all for Me?" The obvious reference is to Peter's own comparison of himself with others in the confidence of love which he thought could never fail. (Comp. Matt. xxvi. 33; Mark xiv. 29.)

The thrice-asked question has been generally understood to have special force in the restoration of him who had thrice denied his Lord, and now thrice declares his love for Him, and is thrice entrusted with a work for Him; and we feel that this interpretation gives a natural meaning to the emphasis of these verses. It may not be fanciful to trace significance, even in the external circumstances under which the question was asked. By the side of the lake after casting his net into the sea had Peter first been called to be a fisher of men (Matt. iv. 19). The lake, the very spot on the shore, the nets, the boat, would bring back to his mind in all their fulness the thoughts of the day which had been the turning-point of his life. By the side of the "fire of coals" (see Note on chap. xviii. 18, the only other place where the word occurs) he had denied his Lord. As the eye rests upon the "fire of coals" before him, and he is conscious of the presence of the Lord, who knows all things (verse 17), burning thoughts of penitence and shame may have come to his mind, and these may have been the true preparation for the words which follow.

**Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.**—Peter uses a less strong expression for love than that which had been used by our Lord. The question seems to ask, "Dost thou in the full determination of the will, in profound reverence and devotion, love Me?" The answer seems to say, "Thou knowest me; I dare not now declare this fixed determination of the will, but in the fulness of personal affection I dare answer, and Thou knowest that even in my denials it was true, 'I love Thee.'"

**He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.**—More exactly, *little lambs.*

(16) **He saith to him again the second time.**—The question is repeated in exactly the same form, except that our Lord does not continue the comparison "more than these." He uses the same word for the higher, more intellectual love, and Peter replies by the same declaration of personal attachment, and the same appeal to his Master's knowledge of him.

unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. (17) He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. (18) Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou wouldest not. (19) This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God.

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**Feed my sheep.**—Better, *be a shepherd of My sheep.* The Vatican and Paris MSS. read "little sheep" here, and in the following verse. (See Note there.)

(17) **He saith unto him the third time.**—Again the question is asked, but this time the Lord uses Peter's own word, and His question seems to say, "Dost thou, in personal affection and devotion, really love Me?" The third time, to him who had three times denied! and this time the love which Peter knows has ever filled his soul seems to be doubted. The question cuts to the very quick, and in the agony of the heart smarting beneath the wound, he appeals in more emphatic words than before to the all-seeing eye that could read the very inmost secrets of his life, "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee."

**Feed my sheep.**—The better reading is, probably, *little sheep.* The difference is of one letter only (πρόβατα and προβατία), and a mistake would therefore be easily made by a copyist. The diminutive word occurs nowhere else in Biblical Greek, and is almost certainly, therefore, part of the original text; but whether it was first written here or in verse 16, or in both, must with our present knowledge be left undetermined. The order of the Received text is "lambs" (verse 15), "sheep" (verse 16), "sheep" (verse 17). The Peshito Syriac must have read "lambs," "little sheep," "sheep"; and this is in part supported by the Vulgate, which has "agnos," "agnos," "oves," and more exactly by the Latin of St. Ambrose, who has "agnos," "oviculas," "oves." This would point to a three-fold gradation answering to the three-fold question, and committing to the Apostle's care the lambs, the little sheep, the sheep of the flock of Christ. Still, it must be admitted that the more probable reading is *lambs, little sheep, little sheep,* and that the difference of thought is in the difference of the verbs. "Feed My lambs; be a shepherd to the weak ones of the flock; feed these weak ones." He who loved Christ is to be like Christ, a good shepherd, giving his life for the sheep who are Christ's. He who had been loved and forgiven, held up that he might not fall, restored after he had fallen, is to be to others what Christ had been to him—feeding men with spiritual truths as they can bear them, gently guiding and caring for those who are as the weak ones of the flock through ignorance, prejudice, waywardness. The chief work of the chief Apostle, and of every true apostle of Christ, is to win back the erring, helpless, sinful sons of men; and the power which fits them for this work is the burning love which quickens all other gifts and graces, and can appeal to the Great Shepherd Himself, "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee." As a remarkable instance of how the Great Shepherd's words impressed themselves upon the Apostle's mind, comp. 1 Pet. ii. 25.

(18) **Verily, verily, I say unto thee.**—This phrase is peculiar to St. John. (Comp. Note on chap. i. 52.) The remainder of the verse contains three pairs of sentences answering to each other :—

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| "Thou wast young," . . . . | "Thou shalt be old;" |
| "Thou girdedst thyself," . . . | "Thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee;" |
| "And walkedst whither thou wouldest," . . . | "And carry thee whither thou wouldest not." |

**Thou wast young.**—Literally, *thou wast younger* (than thou art now). Peter must have been at this time (comp. Matt. viii. 14) in middle age.

**Thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee.**—Do these words refer to the crucifixion of Peter? Tradition, from Tertullian downwards (*Scorp.* 15; *De Præscr.* 35), states that he was crucified, and, interpreting this prophecy by the event, asserts that they do. Tertullian himself so understood them, for he says, "Then is Peter girded by another when he is bound to the cross."

But on the other hand, (1) the girding (with chains) would precede, not follow, the crucifixion; (2) it would be more natural to speak of another stretching forth his hands if the nailing them to the cross is intended; (3) the last clause, "carry thee whither thou wouldest not," could not follow the stretching of the hands on the transverse beam of the cross.

It seems impossible therefore to adopt the traditional reference to crucifixion, and we must take the words, "stretch forth thy hands," as expressing symbolically the personal surrender previous to being girded by another. To what exact form of death the context does not specify. We have thus in the second pair of sentences, as in the first and third, a complete parallelism, the stretching forth of the hands being a part of the girding by another, and the whole being in contrast to "Thou girdedst thyself."

(19) **This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God.**—These words are a comment by the writer, and quite in St. John's style. (Comp. chaps. ii. 21; vi. 6; vii. 29; xii. 33.)

"By what death," or, more exactly, *by what manner of death* (comp. chaps. xii. 33 and xviii. 32), indicates generally the martyrdom of Peter as distinct from a natural death, without special reference to the crucifixion. (See Note on last verse.)

For the phrase "glorify God," comp. chap. xiii. 31; xvii. 1; and see also Phil. i. 20; 1 Pet. iv. 16. From its occurrence here in connection with St. Peter, it passed into the common language of the Church for the death of martyrs.

**Follow me.**—It may be, and the next verse makes it probable, that our Lord withdrew from the circle of the disciples, and by some movement or gesture signified to Peter that he should follow Him; but these words must have had for the Apostle a much fuller meaning. By the side of that lake he had first heard the command "Follow Me" (Matt. iv. 19); when sent forth on his apostleship, he had been taught that to

And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. (20) Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following;[a] which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? (21) Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what *shall* this man do? (22) Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to thee? follow thou me. (23) Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to thee?

[a] ch. 13. 23, and 20. 2.

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follow Christ meant to take up the cross (Matt. x. 38); it was his words which drew from Christ the utterance, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me" (Matt. xvi. 23); to his question at the Last Supper came the answer, "Whither I go, thou canst not follow Me now; but thou shalt follow Me afterwards" (chap. xiii. 36); and now the command has come again with the prophecy of martyrdom, and it must have carried to his mind the thought that he was to follow the Lord in suffering and death itself, and through the dark path which He had trodden was to follow Him to the Father's home.

(20) **Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following.**—We must suppose that St. Peter had retired with our Lord, and that St. John seeing this had followed at a distance. He had been the companion and friend of St. Peter (comp. *Introduction*, p. 371). More than any other—and this is made prominent here—he had entered into close communion with the Lord Himself. He was called the "disciple whom Jesus loved" (comp. chap. xx. 2, and *Introduction*, p. 375); he had leaned on His breast at supper, and, at a sign from Peter, had asked who was the traitor; he may well think that for him too there was some glimpse into the future, some declaration of what his path should be; or in that mingling of act and thought, of sign and thing signified, which run all through these verses, his following may indicate that he too, though he had never dared to say so, was ready to follow wherever the Master went.

(21) **Lord, and what shall this man do?**—The motive prompting this question was probably that of loving interest in the future of his friend. It may well be that the two friends, in the sadness of the dark days through which they had passed, had talked together of what their Master's predictions of the future meant, and had wondered what there was in store for themselves. They knew the world was to hate them as it had hated Him, and they never knew what its hatred for Him was. One of them had learnt that he was to follow his Lord in death as in life, and he now sees the other following them as they draw apart from the group, and would fain know the future of his friend as he knew his own.

(22) **If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?**—The answer must be taken as reproving the spirit which would inquire into another's life and work, with the effect of weakening the force of its own. Here, as in all the earlier details of St. Peter's life, his character is emotional, earnest, loving, but wanting in depth, and not without self-confidence. The words "Follow Me," the meaning of which he has not missed, may well have led him to thoughts and questions of what that path should be, and the truth may well have sunk into the depth of his heart, there to germinate and burst forth in principle and act. But he is at once taken up with other thoughts. He is told to follow, but is ready to lead. He would know and guide his friend's life rather than his own. To him, and to all, there comes the truth that the Father is the husbandman, and it is He who trains every branch of the vine. There is a spiritual companionship which strengthens and helps all who join in it; there is a spiritual guidance which is not without danger to the true strength of him that is led, nor yet to that of him who leads.

The word rendered "tarry" is that which we have before had for "abide" (see chap. xii. 34, and comp. Phil. i. 25 and 1 Cor. xv. 6). It is here opposed to "Follow Me" (in the martyrdom), and means to abide in life.

The phrase, "If I will that he tarry till I come," is one of those the meaning of which cannot be ascertained with certainty, and to which, therefore, every variety of meaning has been given. We have already seen that the Coming of the Lord was thought of in more than one sense. (Comp. especially Notes on Matt. xvi. 28 and Matt. xxiv.; and see also in this Gospel, Note on chap. xiv. 3.) The interpretation which has found most support is that which takes the "coming of the Lord" to mean the destruction of Jerusalem, which St. John, and perhaps he only of the Apostles, lived to see. But the context seems to exclude this meaning, for the mistake of verse 23 would surely have been corrected by a reference to the fact that St. John had survived, and wrote the Gospel after, the "coming of the Lord." The interpretation which the next verse itself suggests is that our Lord made no statement, but expressed a supposition, "If I will," "If it even be that I will;" and this both gives the exact meaning of the Greek, and corresponds with the remainder of our Lord's answer. He is directing St. Peter to think of his own future, and not of his friend's; and He puts a supposition which, even if it were true, would not make that friend's life a subject for him then to think of. Had our Lord told him that St. John should remain on earth until His coming, in any sense of the word, then He would have given an answer, which He clearly declined to give.

**Follow thou me.**—The pronoun "thou" is strongly emphatic. "Thy brother's life is no matter for thy care. Thy work is for thyself to follow Me."

(23) **Then** (better, *therefore*) **went this saying abroad among the brethren.**—For the word "brethren" comp. Notes on Matt. xxiii. 8 and Acts ix. 30. As a general name for the disciples, it is not elsewhere found in the Gospels, but we have the key to it in our Lord's own words to Mary Magdalene (chap. xx. 17).

**Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If . . . .**—The mistake of the brethren arose from their not attending to the force of the conditional particle. They took as a statement what had been said as a supposition, and understood it in the then current belief that the Second Advent would come in their

(24) This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. (25) And there are also many other things which Jesus did,[a] the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

[a] ch. 20. 30.

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own generation. (Comp. 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52; 1 Thess. iv. 17.)

The mistake and its correction are both interesting in their bearing upon the date of the Gospel, and they furnish that kind of evidence which is perfectly natural as a growth, but which cannot possibly be made.

(1) The impression that St. John would not die belongs to the period when the Second Advent was looked for as within the limits of lifetime. This period ceased with the first generation of Christians, and the mistake would therefore point to the close of the first century as a limit beyond which the date of the Gospel cannot be placed.

(2) The mistake having been made, the obvious correction after St. John's death would have been simply to record that event. The correction of the text would place these words within his lifetime.

(24) **This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things.**—Comp. chap. xx. 30, 31. As we have there the formal close of what seems to have been the original Gospel, we have here the formal close of the epilogue. The words are, however, too wide to be limited to the epilogue, and clearly refer to all that has preceded. They identify the writer with the disciple just mentioned, *i.e.*, the disciple whom Jesus loved, and the form of the sentence implies that he who wrote these things was still living, and bearing witness to their truth. He is still testifying to the things of which he wrote.

**And we know that his testimony is true.**—Our first and natural thought is that these are not the words of the writer of the Gospel, but the additional witness of persons knowing him and testifying to his writing. It is usual to explain the "we know" by referring to 1 John v. 18, 19, 20; but the plural of a letter ought not to be quoted to explain the plural in an historic document, and it is probable that the natural thought is the true one. But though the words are an addition, they are a contemporaneous addition present in every important MS. and version, and an undoubted part of the original text. We cannot tell who are the persons whose words we here read—Andrew it may be, or Philip, or some of the seventy disciples who had been witnesses of the work of Christ, or some of the Ephesian Church, as Aristion or John the Presbyter, who felt that the Apostle's personal character gave the stamp of truth to all he said, and add here the conviction that all these words were true. (Comp. *Introduction*, p. 377.)

(25) **And there are also many other things which Jesus did . . . .**—The MSS. evidence for this verse is also so conclusive that almost every competent editor inserts it in his text, but it is not found in the famous Sinaitic Codex. The transference from the plural to the singular—"We know" (verse 24), "I suppose" (in this verse)—has led to the supposition, which is in every way probable, that it is the individual testimony of an amanuensis who, from personal knowledge of the life of Christ, or from knowledge derived from the Apostle John or from others, feels that full beyond all human thought as this Gospel is, it is but a part of the greater fulness. No book could record, no words could tell, what that life was, or what things Jesus did. The disciples saw and believed, and wrote these things that we may believe, and in believing may have life in His name.

The word "Amen" is not found in the better MSS., and in no part of the written text. It is the natural prayer of some copyist, as it is the natural prayer of every devout reader that the writer's purpose may be fulfilled.

The chief MSS. have a subscription appended to the Gospel. "According to John" (Vatican); "Gospel according to John" (Sinaitic [?], Alexandrine, Paris, Basle); "Gospel according to John is ended;" "Gospel according to Luke begins" (Cambridge).

# EXCURSUS ON NOTES TO ST. JOHN.

## EXCURSUS A: DOCTRINE OF THE WORD.

> "Geschrieben steht: 'Im Anfang war das Wort!'
> Hier stock' ich schon! Wer hilft mir weiter fort?
> Ich kann das Wort so hoch unmöglich schätzen
> Ich muss es anders übersetzen
> Wenn ich vom Geiste recht erleuchtet bin.
> Geschrieben steht: 'Im Anfang war der Sinn'
> Bedenke wohl die erste Zeile
> Dass Deine Feder sich nicht übereile.
> Ist es der Sinn, der Alles wirkt und schafft?
> Es sollte stehn: 'Im Anfang war die Kraft!'
> Doch, auch indem ich dieses niederschreibe
> Schon warnt mich was, dass ich dabei nicht bleibe,
> Mir hilft der Geist! Auf ein mal seh'ich Rath
> Und schreibe getrost: 'Im Anfang war die That!'"
> —*Faust* von Goethe.

> "'Tis written: 'In the beginning was the *Word*,'
> Here am I balked: who now can help afford?
> The *Word*?—impossible so high to rate it;
> And otherwise must I translate it,
> If by the Spirit I am truly taught.
> Then thus: 'In the beginning was the *Thought*,'
> This first line let me weigh completely,
> Lest my impatient pen proceed too fleetly.
> Is it the *Thought* which works, creates, indeed?
> 'In the beginning was the *Power*,' I read.
> Yet, as I write, a warning is suggested
> That I the sense may not have fairly tested.
> The Spirit aids me; now I see the light!
> 'In the Beginning was the *Act*,' I write."
> —Bayard Taylor's Translation.

These well-known lines are quoted here because they forcibly express the difficulty, not to say the impossibility, of fully knowing and fully conveying the sense of the term Λόγος (*Logos*), which in our version is rendered "Word." To understand the meaning of Logos is to understand the Gospel according to St. John; and one of the greatest difficulties which the English reader of St. John has to encounter is that it cannot be translated. Our own English term "Word" was chosen as representing *Verbum*, which is found in all the Latin versions, though in the second century both *Sermo* (discourse) and *Ratio* (reason) seem to have been in use as renderings. In a Latin translation of Athanasius *de Incarnatione* (1612) the rendering of *Logos* is *Verbum et Ratio*, and this presents the double meaning of the term, which it is of the utmost importance to bear in mind. The nearest English derivative is "Logic," which is from an adjective derived from *logos*; and we understand by it, not an art or science which has to do with words, but one which has to do with thought and reason. The Greeks used *logos* in both senses, and Aristotle (*Poster. Anal.* i. 10) found it necessary to distinguish between the "logos within" (thought) and the "logos without" (speech). The Stoics introduced the phrase *logos endiathetos* (*verbum mentis*) for "thought," and *logos prophorikos* (*verbum oris*) for "speech"; and these phrases were made prominent in the language of theology by Philo Judæus. The term, then, is two-sided, and the English term "Word" not only fails altogether to approach the meaning of the "logos within" (*verbum mentis*), but it also fails to represent the most important part of that side of the meaning which it does approach; for the "logos without" (*verbum oris*) is speech or discourse, rather than the detached "word."

The term *logos* occurs frequently in the New Testament in the sense of utterance; but when used in this sense it differs from the kindred words (*rhema* and *epos*) in that it always has to do with the living voice. It may mean that which any one said—*sc.*, discourse, argument, doctrine, narrative, matter (about which speech was made); so, on the other hand, it is often used for reason (the faculty), account (to take and to give), reckoning, cause. St. John himself uses the term in this Gospel some thirty-six times in the more general meaning. In the Prologue it is used four times, and in each instance with reference to the person of our Lord. In 1 John i. 1 (see Note there) the phrase "Word of Life" occurs; and in 1 John v. 7 the term "Word" is found absolutely, but this verse is not in any MS. older than the fifteenth century. In Rev. xix. 13 the term "Word of God" is found, and in Heb. iv. 12, 13 (see Note), the Greek term is found in the sense "word of God," and "account" ("with whom we have to do"). But the absolute use of the term *Logos* in a personal sense is confined to the four instances in the Prologue of this Gospel, and it is this special meaning which we have to investigate.

The answers to our inquiry must be sought in the sense attached to the term at the time when, and by the persons among whom, the Gospel was written. In the opening verses of St. John we are at once in the midst of thoughts and terms quite distinct from any with which we are familiar from the earlier Gospels; but they are clearly quite familiar to both the writer and his readers. He uses them without note or comment, and assumes that they convey a known and definite meaning. Now, there are three circles in which we find these thoughts and terms then current:—

(1) We meet with the term *Logos*, expressing a person or personified attribute, in the Gnostic systems which flourished at the commencement of the second century. In Basilides (became prominent about A.D. 125) the Logos is the second of the intelligences which were evolved from the Supreme God—"Mind first is born of the unborn Father, from it again Reason (*Logos*) is born; then from Reason, Prudence; and from Prudence, Wisdom and Power; and from Wisdom and Power, the Virtues and Princes and Angels—those whom they call 'the first.'" (Irenæus, i., xxiv. 3; Oxford Trans. p. 72.)

In Valentinus, who seems to have been a Christian in earlier life (prominent A.D. 140—160), we meet with a more complicated development. The first principle is *Proarche*, or First Beginning; *Propator*, or First Father; *Bythos*, or the Deep. He is eternal and unbegotten, and existed in repose through boundless ages. With Him there existed the Thought (*Ennoia*) of His mind who is also called Grace and Silence. When *Bythos* willed to put forth from Himself the beginning of all things, Thought conceived and brought forth

Understanding (*Nous*) and Truth. Understanding was also called Only-begotten and Father, and was the principle of the whole *Pleroma.* The Understanding produced Reason (*Logos*) and Life, and from this pair was produced the Man and the Church. These four pairs—Deep (*Bythos*) and Thought (*Ennoia*), Understanding (*Nous*) and Truth (*Aletheia*), Reason (*Logos*) and Life (*Zoë*), Man (*Anthropos*) and Church (*Ecclesia*), form the first octave or *ogdoad.* From *Logos* and *Zoë*, proceeded five pairs, which made the *decad;* and from *Anthropos* and *Ecclesia* six pairs, which made the *dodecad.* These together constituted the thirty æons. There was also an unwedded æon called *Horos* (Boundary), or *Stauros* (Cross), who proceeded from *Bythos* and *Ennoia,* and whose office it was to keep every existence in its proper place (Irenæus, i. 1; Oxford Trans. p. 3 *et seq.*). In all this, and in the names of other æons, as *Comforter, Faith, Hope, Love,* we have, so far as terms and expressions go, much that may remind us of the teaching of St. John. But it is the product of a mind acquainted with Christianity, and blending it with other systems.

(2) We meet with the doctrine of the Word also in the circle of Jewish thoughts. Traces of it are found, indeed, in the poetry of the Old Testament itself. (Comp. Pss. xxxiii. 4, 6; cxix. 89, 105; cvii. 20; cxlvii. 15, 18; Isa. xl. 8; lv. 10, 11; Jer. xxiii. 29.) We find also that the Wisdom of God is personified as in Job xxviii. 12 *et seq.* and Prov. viii. and ix. In the Apocryphal Books, *Ecclesiasticus* and *The Wisdom of Solomon* this personification becomes more definite. See Ecclus. i. 1, 4; xxiv. 9—21, and Wisd. vi. 22—ix., and note especially, ix. 1, 2, where "Thy word" and "Thy wisdom" are parallels; ix. 4, "wisdom, that sitteth by Thy throne;" xvi. 12, "Thy word, O Lord, which healeth all things;" xviii. 15, "Thine almighty word leaped down from heaven out of Thy royal throne." Any inference which we draw from these books must, however, be checked by the fact that they belong to the border-land between Hebrew and Greek thought, and that while the Book of Wisdom cannot belong to an earlier date than the middle of the second century B.C., it may belong to the first century A.D., and was even ascribed to Philo himself, as we know from St. Jerome.

We have foreshadowings of the personal Word which are more distinctly Jewish in the Targums,* where the *Memra da-Yeya* (Word of the Lord) becomes almost a synonym of the divine name. "By Myself have I sworn" (Gen. xxii. 16) becomes "By My Word have I sworn." In Gen. xvi. Hagar sees the "Word of the Lord" and afterwards identifies Him with the "Shekinah." So we read that the *Word of the Lord* was with Ishmael, with Abraham, with Isaac, with Joseph. Jacob's vow (Gen. xxviii. 20) is thus read in the Targum of Oukelos, "If the *Memra da-Yeya* will be my help, and will keep me in that way in which I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to wear, and bring me again in peace to my father's house, then *Memra da-Yeya* shall be my God." The Jerusalem Targum reads *Memra da-Yeya* for the Angel-Jehovah in the revelation to Moses (Ex. iii. 14). In Isa. lxiii. 7—10, the Targum of Jonathan reads the *Memra* for the Angel, the Redeemer, and Jehovah; and in Mal. iii. identifies the Coming One with the Angel of the Covenant, and the *Memra* of the Lord. Dr. Etheridge noted in the Targum of Oukelos, in the Pentateuch only, more than 150 places in which the *Memra da-Yeya* is spoken of. In the later Targums it is still more frequent.

(3) Another region of thought in which we find analogies to the doctrine of the Word, is the Judæo-Alexandrine philosophy, which is represented by Philo. A Jew by birth, and descended from a priestly family, Philo was some thirty years old at the commencement of the Christian era. From the study of the Old Testament he passed to that of Plato and Pythagoras, and with such devotion that there was a common proverb, "Either Plato philonises, or Philo platonises." He drank not less deeply of the spirit of other teachers and in the allegorical interpretation of the Essenes, the Cabbalists, and the Therapeutæ, he found the mean between the Hebrew tradition of his youth and the Greek freedom of thought with which he became familiar in later years. The dualism of the Greek philosophers and the Biblical account of creation were both rejected for the Eastern theory of emanation. He thought of God as Eternal Light, from Whom all light comes; whose radiance cannot be gazed upon by human eyes, but which was reflected in the *Word,* or, as the Scripture calls it, Divine Wisdom. This he conceived to be not a mere abstraction, but an emanation, a real existence, and a person. He calls Him, for example, the "first begotten of God," "the Archangel," and, adopting the language of the Stoics (comp. p. 552), the *Logos Endiathetos.* From this proceeded a second emanation, the *Logos Prophorikos,* which manifests the *Logos Endiathetos,* and is Himself manifested by the Universe. The *Logos* is, then, in the conception of Philo, the link between the Universe and God, between objective matter and the spiritual Light which man cannot approach. On the spiritual side, the *Logos* is spoken of in terms which make it not seldom doubtful whether the thought is of a person or of an idea; on the material side, the *Logos* is the active reason and energy, and sometimes seems to be almost identified with the Universe itself. The bridge passes imperceptibly into the territory on either side.

Such are, in a few words, the systems of thought, which stand in relation more or less appreciable to the Johannine doctrine of the Word. The question is, from which, if indeed from any one of these, was the *form* of St. John's teaching derived?

The Gnostic systems are excluded if our conclusion as to the authorship and date of the Gospel is valid. (Comp. *Introduction,* pp. 372, 376 *et seq.*). They are also excluded by independent comparison with the Gospel, and thus they afford a confirmation of that conclusion. They are in the relation of the complex to the simple, the development to the germ. Any one who will carefully read the extract from Irenæus which is given above will find good reason for believing that he is describing a system which may naturally enough have been developed from St. John; but from which the doctrine of St. John could not have been developed. The one is as the stream flowing in all its clearness from the fountain; the other is as the same stream lower in its course, made turbid by the admixture of human thoughts.

There remains the Judæo-Alexandrine philosophy, of which Philo is the leading representative, and the Hebrew thoughts expressed in the Old Testament paraphrases, and in the developments of later Judaism. We are to bear in mind, however, that the line between these cannot be drawn with such clearness and certainty as men generally seem to suppose. The Chaldæan paraphrases contain an Eastern element with which the nation was imbued during its long captivity, and Philo himself borrowed much from Oriental modes of thought. He was, moreover, a Jew, and the Jewish Scriptures and these very Targums were the foundation of his mental training. His philosophy is avowedly based upon the Old Testament. We are to bear in mind also when we speak of the philosophy of Philo that no philosopher arises without a cause, or lives without an effect. Philo represents a great current of thought which influenced himself and his generation, and which he deepened and widened. Of that current Alexandria and Ephesus were the two great centres, the former specially representing Judaism in contact with the freer thought of Greece, and the latter specially representing Judaism in contact with the theosophies of Asia, but both meeting and permeating each other in these great cities. (Comp. *Introduction*, p. 376.)

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* Targum means *translation* or *interpretation.* The word was technically given to the Chaldee paraphrases of the Old Testament, which sprung up after the Captivity, when the mass of the people had lost the knowledge of the older Hebrew. At first these Targums were oral, and writing them was prohibited. When written Targums first came into existence is unknown. Zunz and others think there were written Targums on several books of the Old Testament as early as the time of the Maccabees. (Comp. Article "Targum," in Kitto's *Biblical Cyclopædia,* vol. iii., p. 948 *et seq.*)

We have to think, then, of St. John as trained in the knowledge of the Hebrew Scripture and the paraphrases which explained them, and accustomed from childhood to hear of the *Memra da-Yeya*, the Word of the Lord, as the representative of God to man. Through the teaching of the Baptist he is led to the Christ, and during the whole of Christ's ministry learns the truth that He only had seen the Father, and was the Apostle of God to the world. After Christ's death the Resurrection strengthens every conviction and removes every doubt. The presence of the Spirit at Pentecost brings back the words He had given them as a revelation from God, and quickens the soul with the inspiration which gives the power to understand them. Then the Apostle goes forth to his work as a witness of what he had seen and heard, and for half a century fulfils this work. Then he writes what he so many times had told of Christ's words and Christ's works. He is living in the midst of men round whom and in whom that current of Judæo-Alexandrine thought has been flowing for two generations. He hears men talking of the Beginning, of Logos, of Life, of Light, of Pleroma, of Shekinah, of Only-Begotten, of Grace, of Truth, and he prefixes to his Gospel a short preface which declares to them that all these thoughts of theirs were but shadows of the true. There was a Being from all eternity face to face with God, and that Being was the true Logos, and He was not only with God, but was God. By Him did the universe come into existence. In Him was Life and the Light of men—the true ideal Light which lighteth every man. And not only was that Logos truly God, but He was truly man; the Incarnation was the answer to the problem which their systems of thought had vainly tried to fathom. The Logos, on the spiritual side, from eternity God; on the material side, in time, become flesh: this was the answer which Philo had dimly forecast. He was the Shekinah tabernacled among men, manifesting the glory of the Only-Begotten. In Him was the Pleroma. By Jesus Christ came Grace and Truth. No man had ever seen the brightness of the glory of the presence of God, but the Only-Begotten was the true Interpreter, declaring the Fatherhood of God to man.

Such is the Johannine doctrine of the Word. Shaping itself, as it must have done, if it was to be understood at Ephesus at the close of the first century, in the then current forms of thought, and in the then current terms, it expresses in all its fulness the great truth of the Incarnation. It has bridged for ever the gulf between God and man in the person of One who is both God and man; and this union was possible because there is in man a "logos within"—reason, thought, conscience;—because there is in the spiritual nature of man that which is capable of communion with God.

[This subject is dealt with in the works mentioned in the *Introduction*, and in a very convenient form in Liddon's *Bampton Lectures* and Westcott's *Introduction.* Lücke's treatment of it (Ed. 3, vol. i., p. 249 *et seq.*) is one of the most valuable parts of his invaluable Commentary. See also Dorner, *Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, vol. i., especially Mr. Simon's Appendix, p. 327 *et seq.*, Eng. Trans.; Mansel's article "Philosophy," in Kitto's *Biblical Encyclopædia*, vol. iii., p. 520 *et seq.*; Etheridge, *Translations of the Targums on the Pentateuch*, p. 14 *et seq.*]

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## EXCURSUS B: SOME VARIATIONS IN THE TEXT OF ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL.

It has often been found necessary in the preceding Notes to refer to readings differing from the Received text, on which our Authorised version is based. To justify or discuss these in any degree of fulness would be beyond the scope of the present volume; but it may be of interest, as well as of importance, to give, in two or three typical cases, an outline of the method by which the results are obtained.

**Chap. i. 18.**—The Authorised version reads here, "*the* only begotten *Son*," and the Received text, upon which it is based, has ὁ μονογενὴς υἱος. But soon after the middle of the second century we find the reading μονογενὴς θεὸς—"only begotten *God*"—which has at least an equal, if not a superior, claim to be considered the original text.

The external evidence, judged by the testimony of MSS., of versions, and of quotations in extant works, must be admitted to be in favour of the reading, "only begotten *God*."

Of the chief uncial MSS. (comp. p. xvi.), the Sinaitic, the Vatican, and the Codex Ephraem at Paris, support it; while against it are the Alexandrian MS. now in the British Museum, and a reading of Codex Ephraem from the hand of a later scribe. The preponderance in weight is, however, much greater than it seems to be numerically.

Of the Versions the Revised Syriac (Peshito), the margin of the Philoxenian Syriac, the Æthiopic (?), read "only begotten God." All the Latin versions, the Curetonian, Philoxenian (not the margin) and Jerusalem Syriac, the Georgian, Sclavonic, Armenian, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon read "the only begotten Son." The Revised Syriac must here be regarded as having special weight from the fact that its evidence agrees with that of MSS. from which it usually differs.

Of the Fathers "only begotten God" is read certainly by Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Epiphanius, Didymus *de Trinitate*, Basil, Gregory of

Nyssa, Cyril of Alexandria. "The only begotten Son" is read by Eusebius, Athanasius, Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and by the Latin writers from Tertullian downwards. The uncertain text of many of the Fathers makes their witness doubtful; but this at least seems clear, that the decided weight of Patristic evidence is in favour of "only begotten God." Tregelles lays stress upon the fact that Arius adopted this reading, but it must be observed that Arius very likely considered "God," as here used, in a secondary sense, and so might have regarded the passage as latently, though not on the surface, favouring his own views.

The external evidence being thus in favour of "only begotten God," we have to inquire whether there is any sufficient ground on which it can be set aside. We are at once met by the fact that the term is unique, and therefore, it is often said, not likely to occur; whereas "the only begotten Son" is perfectly natural, and occurs in St. John in chap. iii. 16, 18, and 1 John iv. 19. But we are to remember that what is unnatural to us would have been so to copyists and translators; and the fact that we have an unusual term strongly supported by external evidence is of weight just in proportion as the term is unusual. Nor need a unique term be a matter of suspicion in this Prologue, where we have found so much that is not paralleled in other parts of the New Testament. (Comp. *Excursus A.*)

It has been sometimes thought that "only begotten Son" may have been changed into "only begotten God" from a dogmatic bias. We have seen that Only Begotten (*Monogenes*) was one of the æons in the Ogdoad of Valentinus (p. 553); but there was the greatest care to separate the æons from the original Bythos, and no copyist in the Valentinian interest would have applied the term "God" to the "Only Begotten." Unique as the term was, and unknown to Christian orthodoxy, no copyist, on the other hand, would have ventured to adopt it in the interests of Christianity.

*A priori* reasons would seem, then, to unite with external evidence in favour of the unfamiliar reading, "only begotten God." We find it beyond all question soon after the middle of the second century. It is almost impossible to believe that it was of set purpose, and quite impossible to believe that it was by accident, read instead of "only begotten Son," and the only alternative is that it is part of the original Gospel. The doubtful word was probably written, with the usual contraction, in the uncial characters, $\overline{\Theta\text{C}}$ (ΘΕΟC), and this was read by copyists as the more familiar $\overline{\Upsilon\text{C}}$ (ΥΙΟC); and thus by the change of a single letter and the addition of the article, "only begotten *God*" passed into "*the* only begotten *Son*," and the original text passed into an oblivion, from which it has never been rescued.

But although the term "only begotten God" is unfamiliar to us, it is not foreign to the thought of the Prologue, the very central idea of which is that the Logos was with God, and was God. The eternal Sonship of the Logos is expressed in the parallel sentence "in the bosom of the Father," and in this term "only begotten God" the Prologue repeats emphatically at its conclusion the text with which it opened: "In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God." The omission of the article gives the sentence a meaning which it is difficult to express in translation, but which in Greek makes the term "only begotten God" an assertion—"No man hath seen God at any time; only begotten God as He is, He who is in the bosom of the Father, *He* hath declared Him."

[Comp. for fuller information on this important reading Professor Abbot's articles in the *Andover Bibliotheca Sacra* (Oct. 1861), and *Unitarian Review* (June, 1875), and Professor Drummond in *Theological Review* (Oct. 1871). There is an elaborate and careful note based on Professor Abbot's article in Alford's *Commentary, in loco.* He decides for the Received text, which is followed also by Wordsworth (but without any note on the reading), Tischendorf, and Scrivener. Tregelles, on the other hand, reads "only begotten God," which [illegible] also adopted by Westcott and Hort. The remarkable *Dissertation* upon it, read before the University of Cambridge by Dr. Hort in 1876, will perhaps turn the current of thoughtful opinion in favour of the reading he advocates.]

**Chap. vii. 53—viii. 12.**—This section illustrates a critical question of a wholly different nature. We have in the Received text no less than twelve verses which, by the admission of all competent authorities, have no valid claim to be considered part of the Gospel according to St. John. They are found in no Greek MS. earlier than the sixth century; they are not an original part of any of the oldest versions; they are not quoted as by St. John before the last half of the fourth century.

The external evidence leaves, therefore, no room for doubt that they are an interpolation, and as we have seen in the Notes upon the passages, this is entirely borne out by the matter and style of the verses themselves, and by the break which they cause in the narrative. At the same time they leave the impression, which becomes more vivid on every fresh study of the section, that they are a genuine record of an incident in the life and teaching of Christ. It would have been impossible for any writer in the early Church to have risen so far above the ordinary feeling upon such a question; and their whole tone is that of the words of Christ, and not of the words of man.

But if they are the words of Christ, and yet not part of the Fourth Gospel, how did they come to be inserted in this place? We must remember, as this Gospel itself reminds us, that we have no complete record of the works and words of Christ, and that there must have been many incidents treasured in the memory of the first disciples which have not come down to us. (Comp. Acts xx. 35, and Note there.) We know from Eusebius that many such incidents were narrated in the five books of Papias, who thus gives his own purpose and plan:—"I shall not regret to subjoin to my interpretations also, for your benefit, whatsoever I have at any time accurately ascertained and treasured up in my memory, as I have received it from the elders, and have recorded it in order to give additional confirmation to the truth by my testimony. For I have never, like many, delighted to hear those that tell many things, but those that teach the truth; neither those that record foreign precepts, but those that are given from the Lord to our faith, and that came from the truth itself. But if I met with any one who had been a follower of the elders anywhere, I made it a point to inquire what were the declarations of the elders; what was said by Andrew, Peter, or Philip; what by Thomas, James, John, Matthew, or any other of the disciples of our Lord; what was said by Aristion and by the presbyter John, disciples of the Lord; for I do not think that I derived so much benefit from books as from the living voice of those that are still surviving" (Euseb. *Eccles. Hist.* iii., xxxix.; Bagster's Trans., p. 142). At the end of the same chapter

Eusebius says, "He also gives another history, *of a woman who had been accused of many sins before the Lord.*" The reference is almost certainly to the incident in the present paragraph, and in it we have the probable key to the insertion here. A copyist would write the section from Papias in the margin of his MS., perhaps, as Ewald suggests, to illustrate the statement, "Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man" (chap. viii. 14); and from the margin it found its way, as other such passages did, into the Cambridge and other MSS. Adopted from the margin, it would be placed in the text where there was space for it on the page of the MS., and this would account for the fact that it is found in different positions; for it is placed by one MS. after chap. vii. 36; by several at the end of the Gospel; by four important cursives at the end of Luke xxi. The copyists felt, then, that it was an incident which should have a place in their MSS., but they felt free to decide that place at their own discretion.

Augustine held that the passage had been omitted on the ground of the supposed encouragement it gave to lax views, and this position has been maintained by others in ancient and modern times. It does not, however, account (1) for the fact that chap. vii. 53 is part of the doubtful passage; (2) the great variations of place and of readings in the MSS. where it is found; (3) the internal differences of matter and style.

[Comp. Scrivener's *New Testament Criticism*, Ed. 2, p. 530 *et seq.*; Alford's note *in loco*, in which he incorporates the results of Lücke's full discussion; Lightfoot, in *Contemporary Review*, Oct. 1875.]

**Chap. xviii. 1.**—This is a variation of another kind, and one of little practical importance, except that the Received text has furnished ground for one of the instances quoted in proof of the position that the writer was not a Jew of Palestine. It is of interest as illustrating the way in which various-readings have arisen.

Our Authorised version has "the brook Cedron," departing from the Received text, which has the article in the plural, and must be rendered "the brook (or, more exactly, *the winter-torrent*) of the cedars." The article is, however, in the singular in the Alexandrian MS., which supports the Authorised version, and this reading is adopted by Griesbach, Scholz, Lachmann, and Meyer. The Sinaitic and Cambridge MSS. have both the article and the substantive in the singular—"the brook Cedrus," or "the brook of the cedar"—and this is the reading adopted by Tischendorf (Ed. 8). The Vatican MS., and a later correction of the Sinaitic MS., read with the Received text "the brook of the cedars," and this is the reading adopted by Alford, Tregelles, and Westcott and Hort.

It must be allowed that this reading, "the brook of the cedars," has most external support. But against it is the fact that both the other texts agree in reading the singular article. The probable explanation is that the original text was *τοῦ κεδρών* (the Kedron)—*i.e.*, the Hebrew name of the torrent (*Kidrôn*), meaning "black" or "dark," was written in Greek letters. But this termination of the substantive would seem to a Greek copyist like a genitive plural (*κέδρων*), for the uncial MSS. would have no accents, and he would make the article agree with it, reading *τῶν κέδρων* ("of the cedars"). Another copyist would do just the opposite, changing the number of the substantive to agree with the article, and reading *τοῦ κέδρου* ("of the Cedrus," or "of the cedar"). In this way the reading of the Alexandrian MS., which is adopted in the Authorised version, explains, on the one hand, how that of the Sinaitic and Cambridge MSS., and, on the other hand, how that of the Vatican MS., would arise; and being the only one of the three which explains the others, it probably represents the original text.

There is in any case no foundation for the argument that the writer was unacquainted with Hebrew, for even if the true reading be "of the cedars" (*τῶν κέδρων*) a Jew may have chosen it to represent the Hebrew word from its similarity in sound. It is remarkable that in the LXX. translation of 2 Sam. xv. 23 the word occurs twice (once in the Hebrew and English), *i.e.*, as an appellative and as a proper name. Comp. 1 Kings xv. 13 (LXX.).

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## EXCURSUS C: THE SACRAMENTAL TEACHING OF ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL.

The Fourth Gospel contains no record of the institution of Holy Baptism or of the Eucharist. This will not surprise us if we remember that it belonged to a generation later than the journeys and letters of St. Paul, in which we find that both sacraments had become part of the regular life of the Church. That which was constant and undoubted, and was part of the gospel wherever it was proclaimed, and in the formularies of which the very words of institution were preserved, needed not to be told again. But that which is not told is assumed. Like the Transfiguration, the Agony in Gethsemane, the Ascension, both sacraments are more than recorded; they are interwoven in the very texture of the Gospel. The discourse with Nicodemus in chap. iii. and the discourse in the synagogue at Capernaum in chap. vi. could not have been written at the close of the first century without being understood by the writer, and without being intended to be understood by the readers, as discourses on Holy Baptism and the Eucharist. In the Notes on these chapters an attempt has been made to bring out their true meaning in detail, and to these the reader is referred. Nor are we concerned here with the controversies which in after ages have gathered round these centres. All that can be attempted is to point out that the differences of opinion with regard to the general interpretation of the chapters as a whole have arisen from reading them with preconceived convictions as to their meaning, and from confounding things which ought to be distinguished. It may be granted that no one who heard the discourse at Capernaum could understand it of the solemn institution, which was still in the future, and then wholly outside any possibility of current thought; but it does not follow that the discourse was not intended to teach the doctrine of the Eucharist, and to be interpreted in the events and words of the Last Supper. It takes its place among the many things which the disciples afterwards remembered that He had said unto them, and believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said. (Comp. Note on chap. ii. 22.) The conclusion that the words have no reference to the Eucharist would require the statement, not that the disciples could not understand them at the time, but that Jesus Himself did not; and no one who is prepared to admit that to Him the future was as the present, and that when He said, "I am the Bread of Life," "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you," He knew that He would also take bread and break it, and say, "This is My body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of Me;" and would take the cup, and say, "This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you," can doubt that He taught in word at the one Passover that which He taught in act and word at the other. It may be granted, again, that when St. John heard, with or from Nicodemus, of the new birth which was of water and of the Spirit, he may have asked, as the teacher of Israel did, "How can these things be?" but the statement that the discourse does not apply to the sacrament of Baptism is inconsistent with the commission to the Apostles to baptise all nations, and the fact that the day of Pentecost and the history of the Apostolic Church must have brought to the writer's mind in all its fulness what the meaning of the spiritual birth was. It may be granted that these truths, as they were revealed by Jesus Christ, were beyond the comprehension of any who heard them, and that the teaching of these chapters is inconsistent with the degree of faith and spiritual receptivity which even at the end of our Lord's ministry is found in the circle of the Apostles; but we are to remember once more that the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is in this very Gospel itself promised to guide them into all truth, and that in the person of him who records the promise there is the evidence that it had been fulfilled.

We have seen in chap. xx. 22, 23, how the Apostle thinks of the act of breathing on the disciples, with which Jesus accompanied the gift of the Holy Ghost and the power to remit sins, as itself a sacramental sign; and throughout the Gospel we have seen how he regards every work of Jesus as a sign of a spiritual reality beyond. The whole Gospel is, so to speak, sacramental. The Word became flesh, and the whole life in the flesh was a manifestation which the physical eye could look upon and the physical ear could hear, that by means of these senses the human spirit may perceive the nature of the Eternal Spirit in whose image it was made. The spiritual was manifested in material form, that in it the spiritual nature of man embodied in material form may have communion with God. Every word and work was "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace," and at the time when the Apostle wrote two of these signs were specially regarded by the Church as those "ordained by Christ Himself as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof." (Comp. Notes on Matt. xxvi. 26—29; xxviii. 19; Mark xiv. 22—25; Luke xxii. 19, 20; Acts ii. 46; 1 Cor. xi.)

## EXCURSUS D: THE DISCOURSES IN ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL.

No difficulty with regard to this Gospel has been more strongly felt by those who accept the authenticity, or more cogently urged by those who reject it, than the way in which the discourses of our Lord as they are recorded in the Fourth Gospel differ from the shorter detached sayings and parables with which we are familiar in the Synoptists. "*Il faut faire un choix,*" says M. Renan, "*si Jésus parlait comme le veut Matthieu, il n'a pu parler comme le veut Jean.*" This is not all; for not only are these discourses of Jesus unlike those of the earlier Gospels, but the Fourth Gospel preserves unity of style, whether Jesus is speaking, or John the Baptist, or the writer himself. Further, while this style widely differs from that of the earlier Gospels, it very clearly resembles that of the First Epistle of St. John.

This difference must, to a large extent, be at once admitted by every candid inquirer; but M. Renan's inference will not follow unless the difference is so great that it cannot be accounted for. It may be assumed here that the arguments of the *Introduction* have led the reader to think that the Johannine Authorship of the Gospel, is, at least, in the highest degree probable. The writer claims, as we have seen (p. 374), to be an eye-witness and to have seen and heard that which he records, and others give their sanction to the claim. It follows, therefore, even if all that has been said about these discourses and their difference from those of the Synoptists can be established, that we have nothing more than a difficulty which our ignorance cannot explain; but this cannot weigh against the position which, on so many other grounds, has been established. But is the difference—great as it undoubtedly is—wholly inexplicable, or, indeed, greater than under all the circumstances we have a right to expect?

(1) It must be remembered, in the first place, that the ground common to the Fourth Gospel and the earlier three is much greater than it is often supposed to be. The following parallels are given that the reader may conveniently estimate it. The texts may be found quoted in parallel columns in Godet and Luthardt; and the weight of their cumulative testimony can be felt only by one who will carefully compare them.

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| Chap. ii. 19; | Matt. xxvi. 61, xxvii. 40; Mark xiv. 58, xvi. 29. |
| —— iii. 18; | Mark xvi. 16. |
| —— iv. 44; | Matt. xiii. 57; Mark vi. 4. |
| —— v. 8; | Matt. ix. 6; Mark ii. 9; Luke v. 24. |
| —— vi. 20; | Matt. xiv. 27; Mark i. 50. |
| —— — 35; | Matt. v. 6; Luke vi. 21. |
| —— — 37; | Matt. xi. 28, 29. |
| —— — 46; | Matt. xi. 27; Luke x. 22. |
| —— xii. 7; | Matt. xxvi. 12; Mark xiv. 8. |
| —— — 8; | Matt. xxvi. 11; Mark xiv. 7. |
| —— — 25; | Matt. x. 39, and xvi. 25; Mark viii. 35; Luke ix. 14. |
| —— — 27; | Matt. xxvi. 38; Mark xiv. 24. |
| —— xiii. 3; | Matt. xi. 27. |
| —— — 16, and xv. 20; | Matt. x. 24; Luke vi. 40. |
| —— — 20; | Matt. x. 40; Luke x. 16. |
| —— — 21; | Matt. xxvi. 21; Mark xiv. 18. |
| —— — 38; | Matt. xxvi. 34; Mark xiv. 30; Luke xxii. 34. |
| —— xiv. 18; | Matt. xxviii. 20. |
| —— — 28; | Mark xiii. 32. |
| —— — 31; | Matt. xxvi. 46. |
| —— xv. 21; | Matt. x. 22. |
| —— xvi. 32; | Matt. xxvi. 31; Mark xiv. 27. |
| —— xvii. 2; | Matt. xxviii. 18. |
| —— xviii. 11; | Matt. xxvi. 55. |
| —— — 17; | Matt. xxvii. 11; Mark xv. 2; Luke xxiii. 3. |
| —— xx. 23; | Matt. xvi. 19, and xviii. 18. |

The passages in Matt. xi. 25—27 and xv. 13 and Luke x. 22 should be specially noticed, as containing thoughts like those which meet us in St. John.

(2) If we accept the common belief that our Lord spoke in the current Syro-Chaldaic, then the discourses

of the Greek Gospels are translations, and a translator's own style naturally impresses itself upon his work.

(3) The scene of the Fourth Gospel is, for the most part, Jerusalem; that of the Synoptists is Galilee. In the one case our Lord is chiefly addressing scribes and Pharisees, Rabbis and elders; in the other case He is chiefly addressing the multitudes of Galilee, peasants and fishermen, who flocked to hear Him. It is true that one of the most striking of the discourses of the Fourth Gospel was delivered in the synagogue at Capernaum (chap. vi. 59), but in this discourse it is the hierarchical party ("the Jews," see Note on chap. i. 19) who murmur at Him, and it is to them that the discourse is chiefly addressed. Is the difference in the discourses greater than that between a University sermon of a distinguished teacher, and the address delivered in a village church or in the open air by the same man?

(4) We possess no part of the teaching of Christ in full. The Fourth Gospel does not profess to be more than an historical *résumé*, a fragment of a great whole, which could not possibly be produced (chaps. xx. 30, 31; xxi. 24, 25). We read it in detached portions, and think of it as representing the teaching of the ministerial life of Christ; but we seldom realise that the whole of the teaching which we have would have occupied but a few hours in delivery, whilst it is set in an historical framework which extends over months and years. Now, in making a summary of the discourses of Christ, nothing is more natural than that each writer should have chosen such portions as fell in with the bent of his own mind, the depth of his own perception, and the special object in writing which he himself had in view. And as nothing is more natural, so nothing can be more providential than that the teaching of Christ should be thus preserved as it presented itself to minds of widely-differing types, who are representatives of the differing thoughts and culture of every age. From this it results that the peasant and the fisherman, the scribe and the scholar, in all places and in all times, alike find in the doctrine of Christ the truth that satisfies the soul.

(5) The unity of style in the whole of the Fourth Gospel, and the similarity between that of the Gospel and that of the First Epistle, must be evident to every thoughtful reader. It does not follow that this style is wholly St. John's. Surely we may believe rather that the loving and beloved disciple, who in closest intimacy drank of his Master's spirit and listened to His words, caught in some degree the very form in which that Master spoke. The difficulty felt as to the unity of style is in truth an argument of no small weight in favour of the authenticity. No criticism has been able to dismember this Gospel, and assign part to one writer and part to another. It stands or falls as a whole, and the conviction which comes from the study of individual parts applies therefore to every part. The unity of style with that of the Epistle enables us to add the independent testimony which we have for the Epistle (comp. *Introduction* to it) to the general testimony in favour of the Gospel.

(6) Still it is impossible to deny that there is a subjective element in the discourses recorded in the Fourth Gospel: they cannot have been stored in the mind of the beloved disciple for fifty years without bearing the impress of that mind. He cannot have written in Ephesus at the close of the first century without being influenced by the current of thought in the midst of which he lived; and the purpose with which the Gospel was written (see *Introduction*, p. 377) must have moulded the form which it took. But is it therefore the less authentic? Does it the less produce the exact teaching of Christ? To answer these questions in the affirmative is to forget that the author, like other holy men of old, was inspired of God; to forget that the *man* was inspired, not the form or the word; to forget that presence of the Paraclete which was, as this very Gospel emphatically declares, "to teach all things, and bring all things to remembrance, *whatsoever I have said unto you*," and "to guide into all truth."

It is not, then, necessary to make our choice between St. Matthew and St. John, or to believe that the Gospel is not the "Gospel of Jesus Christ" because it is "the Gospel *according to* St. John." Rather, it is necessary to study the works and words of Christ as each Evangelist, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has recorded them, and in each part to seek to catch something of the fulness of that life which no record can convey; and as the experience of men in all ages has proved, there is no part in which that life is so fully presented as in the discourses related by St. John.

[Comp. Westcott, *Introduction*, p. 281 *et seq.*; Sanday, *Authorship and Historical Character of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 69 *et seq.*; Godet, *Introduction*, pp. 163—205; Luthardt, *St. John the Author of the Fourth Gospel*, pp. 224—244; and especially the comparison between the Sermon on the Mount and the Teaching in the Fourth Gospel, appended to Professor Maurice's *Discourses*, pp. 488—492.]

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## EXCURSUS E: THE OMISSION OF THE RAISING OF LAZARUS IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS.

This omission has so often been made a difficulty, and to many minds is perhaps so real a difficulty, that a few words may be added upon it, though the Notes have already indicated what is probably the true solution. (Comp. especially Notes on chap. xi. 8—16.) If, as there is every reason to believe, the Gospel according to St. Mark represents the original document on which the Synoptic Gospels are founded; and if St. Mark is also the interpreter of St. Peter, who wrote whatsoever he recorded with great accuracy (Euseb. *Eccles. Hist.* iii. 39; comp. *Introduction to St. Mark*), then the absence of St. Peter from the body of disciples who journeyed to Bethany with our Lord would be a sufficient reason why this miracle was not included in the Synoptic tradition, and why it is therefore not recorded in any one of the earlier Gospels.

No stress can be laid upon the common explanation that silence was imposed upon the Evangelists who wrote during the lifetime of the sisters or of Lazarus himself. There is no such reticence in the case of the young man at Nain, or of the daughter of Jairus; and the feeling forces itself upon the mind that such an explanation owes its existence to the necessity which has been felt to explain the difficulty somehow. This necessity has been felt, perhaps, too strongly. To us the miracle seems to stand alone as an exercise of power which every one who knew of it must have regarded as we regard it, and which no record of the life and works of Christ could omit. But the miracle differs essentially from others only in the fulness of our knowledge of it, and the circumstances which attended it. Each Evangelist does record a miracle of raising from the dead, and St. Luke records two. They are not dwelt upon as in any way beyond the limits of the miraculous power of Christ, which every Evangelist fully sets forth. All Jews, indeed, had expected such power to accompany the Messianic reign; they knew from their Scriptures that it had been vouchsafed to Elijah; they record (Matt. xi. 5; Luke vii. 22), without any comment, the answer to the Baptist, "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, *the dead are raised up*, and the poor have the gospel preached to them;" and St. Luke records also in the Acts that the power of life and death was committed to the Apostles. The common feeling is shown in this very narrative, where the Jews ask, "Could not this Man which opened the eyes of the blind have caused that even this man should not have died?" (xi. 37.)

Stress may with greater confidence be laid upon the fact that the miracle at Bethany does not fall in the local sphere of the Synoptic narratives, but that it does naturally fall in with the Jerusalem ministry, which is specially related by St. John. His connection with the city, and residence in it, would certainly bring him into contact with the family at Bethany, and supply him with details which no other Evangelist would know. Knowing this incident himself, and knowing that the Synoptists had not recorded it, knowing too that it explained much that they did record, and was indeed the key without which the events of the last week could not be accounted for, he here, as elsewhere, adds to their narrative that which was lacking in it. It is one of the many instances in which the exact fitting of independent portions of the history prove that they are parts of one great whole.

The question of the authenticity of this record is, of course, implied in the often-asked question, "Why is it found only in St. John?" and behind this lies the wider question of the credibility of miracles. All that has been said in the *Introduction* on the Authenticity of the Gospel as a whole applies to this part of it; and there is no part of it which bears the impress of historical truth more fully than this does. The characters of Martha and Mary, the dialogues, the feelings of the Jews, the whole picture, are drawn to the life.

The silence of the record is itself significant. It is an inspired historian, and not a forger of the miraculous, in whose narrative Lazarus himself utters no word.

> "Where wert thou, brother, those four days?"
> There lives no record of reply,
> Which telling what it is to die
> Had surely added praise to praise.
>
> * * * * *
>
> Behold a man raised up by Christ!
> The rest remaineth unreveal'd;
> He told it not; or something seal'd
> The lips of that Evangelist."

## EXCURSUS F: THE DAY OF THE CRUCIFIXION OF OUR LORD.

[*For this Excursus, which deals with a difficulty belonging to the Four Gospels rather than to the Fourth Gospel, Professor Plumptre has been kind enough to make himself responsible.*]

(1) The narratives of the first Three Gospels, and that of the Fourth, agree in the statement that on the night that immediately preceded the betrayal or the crucifixion of our Lord, He and His disciples met together at a supper. As to what that supper was they seem at first to differ. The first Three agree in speaking of it as the first day (Matthew and Mark), or *the* day (Luke), of the feast known as that of unleavened bread, the day when "the Passover must be slain" (Mark, Luke). The disciples ask where they are to prepare the Passover. They are sent to the owner of the upper room, where they are met with the message that their Lord purposes to eat the Passover there. When they arrived they "made ready the Passover" (Matthew, Mark, Luke). As they begin He tells them that He has eagerly desired to eat that Passover with them before He suffered (Luke xxii. 15). At a certain stage of the meal, which corresponded with the later ritual of the Paschal Supper, He commands them to see in the bread and the cup which He then blessed the memorial feasts of the New Covenant. The impression, *primâ facie*, left by all the Three, is that our Lord and His disciples partook, at the usual time, of the Paschal Supper. In St. John, on the other hand, there is no record of the institution of this memorial feast. The supper is introduced as "before the feast of the Passover" (John xiii. 1). When Judas leaves the room the other disciples think that he is sent to buy what was needed for the feast (John xiii. 29). When the priests are before Pilate they shrink from entering into the Prætorium, lest they should be defiled, and so be unable to eat the Passover (John xviii. 28). The impression, *primâ facie*, left by St. John's Gospel is that our Lord's death coincided with the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb; that left by the Three is that the Paschal lamb had been sacrificed the previous evening.

(2) The difference has been regarded by many critics as altogether irreconcilable, and conclusions have been drawn from it unfavourable to the authority of one or both the narratives. Those who look on the Gospel of St. John as the work of a writer of the second century, see in this discrepancy a desire to give a sanction to the local usage of the Church of Ephesus, or to force upon his readers, as in his relation of "a bone of Him shall not be broken" (John xix. 36), the correspondence between the Passover and the death of Christ. Those who accept the Gospel as St. John's, wholly or in part, see in his narrative a correction, designed or undesigned, of the narrative of the Three, and look on that narrative accordingly as more or less untrustworthy. Some even of those who shrink from these conclusions have been content to rest in the conviction that we have no adequate *data* for the solution of the problem.

Some minor difficulties gather round the main question. It was not likely, it has been urged, that on the very night of the Passover the high priests should have taken the counsel and the action that led to the capture in Gethsemane; nor that on the day that followed, "a day of holy convocation" (Ex. xii. 16), they should have sat in judgment, and appeared as accusers before Pilate and Herod; nor that Simon of Cyrene should have come from the country (Mark xv. 21); nor that Judas should be supposed to have been sent, if it were the Paschal Supper, to make purchases of any kind—as if the shops in Jerusalem would on such a night be open (John xiii. 29).

The day of the Crucifixion is described by all four Evangelists as "the preparation," which it is assumed must mean "the preparation for the Passover." In St. John (xix. 14) it is definitely spoken of as "the preparation of the Passover."

(3) Some solutions of the problem, which rest on insufficient evidence, may be briefly noticed and dismissed. (*a*) It has been supposed that our Lord purposely anticipated the legal Paschal Supper, and that the words "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer" (Luke xxii. 15), were an intimation of that purpose. Against this, however, there is the fact that the disciples, who could have no such anticipatory purpose, ask the question where they are to prepare, and then actually prepare the Passover as a thing of course, and that the Three Gospels, as we have seen, all speak of the Last Supper as being actually on the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, which is the Passover. (*b*) It has been conjectured that the Galilean usage as to the Passover may have varied from that of Judæa; but of this there is not the shadow of evidence, nor is it likely that the priests who had to take part in the slaying of the Paschal lambs would have acquiesced in what would seem to them a glaring violation of their ritual. (*c*) Stress has been laid on the fact that in the later ritual of the Passover week a solemn meal was eaten on the day that followed the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb, which was known as the *Chagigah* (= festivity, or festive meal). This also was a feast upon flesh that had been offered in sacrifice, and it has been thought by some who seek to reconcile the four narratives, that this was the feast for which Judas was supposed to be ordered to make provision, that this was "the Passover," the prospect of which led the high priests to keep clear of entering under the roof of the Prætorium. In many ways this seems, at first, an adequate solution of the difficulty, but there is no evidence that the term "the Passover," which had such a strictly definite significance, was ever extended to include this subordinate festivity.

(4) It remains to examine the narratives somewhat more closely, and with an effort to realise, as well as we can, the progress of the events which they narrate. As a preliminary stage in the inquiry, we may note two or three facts which cannot well be excluded from consideration. (*a*) The narrative of the first Three Gospels, probably independent of each other, represents, on any assumption, the wide-spread tradition of the churches of Judæa, of Syria, and of Asia, of St. Matthew, St. Peter, and St. Paul. It is antecedently improbable that that tradition could have been wrong in so material a fact. (*b*) The Fourth Gospel, whether by St. John or a later writer, must, on any assumption, have been written when that tradition had obtained possession of well-nigh all the churches. It is antecedently improbable either that such a writer should contradict the tradition without knowing that he did so, or that, if he knew it, he should do so silently and without stating that his version of the facts was more accurate than that commonly received. It is at least a probable explanation of his omitting to narrate the institution of the Lord's Supper that the record of that institution was recited whenever the disciples met to break bread at Ephesus as elsewhere (1 Cor. xi. 23—26), and that he felt, therefore, that it was better to record what others had left untold than to repeat that with which men were already familiar. If he was not conscious of any contradiction, then his mode of narrating, simply and without emphasis noting facts as they occurred, was natural enough.

(5) It remains to be seen whether there is, after all, any real discrepancy. Let us picture to ourselves, assuming for a time that the Last Supper was the Paschal meal, what was passing in Jerusalem on the afternoon of that 14th of Nisan. The Passover lamb was, according to the law (Ex. xii. 6; Lev. xxiii. 5; Num. ix. 3, 5), to be slain "between the two evenings." The meaning of the formula is not certain. If, as some have supposed, it meant between the evening of the 14th and that of the 15th of Nisan, it gives a space of twenty-four hours within which the lamb might be slain and eaten, and then the whole apparent contradiction between the two narratives disappears. It was open to the disciples to eat their Passover on the 14th of Nisan, to the priests to eat theirs on the 15th. The occurrence, however, of the same expression in the rules as to the daily evening sacrifice (Ex. xxix. 39, 41; Num. xxviii. 4) excludes this interpretation, and it seems more probable that it covered the period that preceded and followed the setting of the sun. (Comp. Deut. vi. 2.) Looking to the prominence given to the ninth hour (3 P.M.), by the connection with the evening sacrifice and prayer (Acts iii. 1), it would be probable enough that the slaughter of the Paschal lambs would begin at that hour, and this conclusion is expressly confirmed by Josephus, who states that they were slain from the ninth to the eleventh hour, *i.e.*, from 3 to 5 P.M. (*Wars*, vi. 9, §3). It is clear, however, that the process would take up the whole of that time, and would tend to stretch beyond it. Josephus (*ut supra*) reckons the number of lambs that had to be sacrificed at 270,000. Some were certain to begin their Paschal meal two hours before the others.

(6) Everything indicates that the disciples were among the earliest applicants for the priests' assistance. The Galileans abstained from work, as a rule, on the feast-day, more rigidly than the dwellers in Judæa, and this would naturally lead to their making their preparations early. Peter and John are, accordingly, sent to prepare "when the day came." They get the room ready. They hasten, we may believe, to the Court of the Temple with the lamb. They sit down to their meal "at evening," *i.e.*, about sunset, or 6 P.M. (Matt. xxvi. 20; Mark xiv. 27; Luke xxii. 14). It was in the nature of the case certain that the priests would be the last to leave the courts of the Temple, where they had to wait till the last lamb was offered, to burn the fat and offer incense, and cleanse the Temple, and purify themselves by immersion from the blood of the sacrifices, and that their Paschal meal would, therefore, be the latest at Jerusalem. They could scarcely expect in any case to eat their Passover before 9 or 10 P.M.

Now let us turn to the upper room, in which our Lord and the disciples were assembled. At a comparatively early stage of the meal, before the fourth, or possibly before the third of the four cups of wine which belonged to the ritual of the feast, Judas leaves to do his traitor's work. He has reason to believe that his Master will go out that evening, as was His wont, to Gethsemane. He goes at once to the priests, say about 8 or 9 P.M., with the welcome tidings. The urgency of the case, the sacred duty of checking the false and blasphemous Prophet who called Himself the Son of God, the urgency of the policy which sought to prevent the tumult which might have been caused by an arrest in the day-time, are all reasons for immediate action. *The Paschal meal is postponed.* They will be able, by-and-by, to comply with the rule that it must be consumed before the morning (Ex. xii. 10). The guards are summoned and sent on their errand, as they had been once before on the "great day" of the Feast of Tabernacles (John vii. 37—45). Messages are despatched to call the members of the Sanhedrin (or, at least, a sufficient number for the purpose) to the hurried meeting, which was held before dawn. Assume these facts, and all runs smoothly. When Judas leaves, the disciples, looking forward to the usual festive *Chagigah* on the following day, the *feast* as distinct from the *Passover*, suppose that he is gone to prepare for that, and there is no ground for thinking that at that hour the markets would be shut, or that lambs, and bread, and wine might not be purchased, or, at least, ordered for the following day. When the priests, on the other hand, refused to enter into the Prætorium, "lest they should be defiled," it was because they, and they alone, perhaps, in all Jerusalem, had still to eat the Passover which others had eaten on the previous evening. Had their meal been due on the evening that followed the Crucifixion, their scruples would have been needless. They had but to wash and wait till sunset, and they would have been purified from all defilement. With them the case was more urgent. Probably even the pressure of hunger made them anxious to finish the untasted meal of the previous evening. It was then "early," say about 4 or 5 A.M. When Pilate gave his sentence it was "about the sixth hour," *i.e.*, assuming St. John to use the Roman reckoning of the hours, 6 A.M. (But see Notes on John iv. 6, and xix. 14.) Then their work was done. As soon as they had left the matter in Pilate's hands *they could eat their Passover*, turning the supper into a breakfast. This they had time for while their Victim was being mocked by the Roman soldiers and led out to Calvary. When it was over, they were able to reappear between 9 A.M. and noon, and to bear their part in the mockings and blasphemies of the multitude (Matt. xxvii. 41; Mark xv. 31). The disciples, on the other hand, who had eaten their Passover, found nothing to hinder them (this is obviously true, at least, of the writer of the Fourth Gospel) from going into the Prætorium, hearing what passed between Pilate and his prisoner (John xviii. 33—40), and witnessing, it may be, the scourgings and the mockings. Joseph of Arimathæa was not deterred by any fear of defilement from going to Pilate, for he too had, we must believe, eaten his Passover at the proper time (Matt. xxvii. 57).

(7) So far, then, on this view all is natural and consistent. St. John omits the fact of the meal being the Passover, as he omits the institution of the Lord's Supper, because these were things that were familiar to every catechumen, and confines himself to points of detail or of teaching which the current tradition passed over. He is not conscious that he differs from that tradition at all, and therefore neither emphasises his difference, nor is careful to avoid the appearance of it. On the other hand, the assumption that the Passover followed the Crucifixion involves the almost incredible supposition that the chief priests could remain by the cross till 3 P.M., and then go to Pilate (John xix. 31) regardless of their previous scruples; that nearly the whole population of Jerusalem, men and women, instead of cleansing their houses from leaven and preparing for the Passover, were crowding to the scene of the Crucifixion; that Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa and the Maries were burying the body of Jesus, and so incurring, at the very hour of the Passover, or immediately before it, a ceremonial defilement which would have compelled them to postpone their Passover for another month (Num. ix. 10). They go, the first at least of them, to Pilate, and both the visits are, it will be noted, recorded by the same Evangelist who recorded the scruples of the priests, without any explanation of what, on the other theory, is the apparent inconsistency.

(8) There remains only a few minor points above noticed. And (*a*) as to *the Preparation.* Here the answer lies on the surface. That name (*Paraskeüè*) was given to the day of the week, our Friday, the day before the Sabbath, and had absolutely nothing to do with any preparation for the Passover. The Gospels show this beyond the shadow of a doubt (Mark xv. 42; Matt. xxvii. 62; Luke xxiii. 54). If any confirmation were wanted, it may be found in the fact that the name is applied in a Græco-Roman decree quoted by Josephus (*Ant.* xvi. 6, § 2) to the week-day which answers to our Friday. Even the phrase which seems most to suggest a different view, the "preparation of the Passover" in John xix. 14, does not mean more, on any strict interpretation, than the "Passover Friday," the Friday in the Passover week, and coming, therefore, before a Sabbath more solemn than others (John xix. 31). It may be noted further that the term *Paraskeüè* was adopted by the Church, Western as well as Eastern, as a synonym for the *Dies Veneris*, or Friday. (*b*) The supposed difficulty as to Simon of Cyrene is of the slightest possible character. There is nothing to indicate that he was coming from field-labour. And if he had eaten his Passover on the previous day, either in Jerusalem or its immediate neighbourhood, there was nothing either in law or custom to prevent his entering the city on the following morning. (*c*) The questions connected with the action of the priests, and the thoughts of the disciples as to the meaning of our Lord's command to Judas, have been already dealt with.

It remains, in submitting this explanation to the judgment of the thoughtful reader, that I should acknowledge my obligations to the exhaustive article on PASSOVER by the late Rev. S. Clark, M.A., in the *Dictionary of the Bible*, and to two articles on THE LAST SUPPER OF THE LORD in vols. viii. and ix. of the *Contemporary Review* by the Rev. Professor Milligan, D.D., of Aberdeen.

## EXCURSUS G: THE MEANING OF THE WORD "PARACLETE."

"A *Paraclete*, then, in the notion of the Scriptures is an Intercessor."—BP. PEARSON.

In the Notes on chaps. xiv. 16 and 26, xv. 26, and xvi. 7, the word Paraclete (παράκλητος) has been rendered *Advocate* in preference to "Comforter," which is the translation in the Authorised version. The object of this Excursus is to explain and justify this preference, for although the change is accepted by the majority of competent scholars, and the older rendering is probably destined to become obsolete, it, for the present, holds a place in the memory and feelings of English readers, from which it will not be removed unless a sufficient reason be shown.

The facts of the case are briefly as follows:—

(1) The word παράκλητος is a verbal adjective of passive signification, the simple meaning of which is "a person called to the side of another." It acquired the sense of an agent, and the constant meaning in the

classical writers is "Advocate," in the technical forensic sense. This latter word is of exactly the same formation, and expresses in Latin just what Paraclete expresses in Greek. No instance can be quoted in which *παράκλητος* is used by any classical writer in the sense of "Comforter." It is quite beside the question to quote passages in which derivatives of the same root are used in this sense; the point is that *παράκλητος* acquired a definite technical meaning, and neither has nor can have any other meaning.

(2) The classical usage being thus undoubted, we have next to examine its meaning in Biblical Greek. It nowhere occurs in the LXX. translation of the Old Testament, though other derivatives of the same root are common. In Job xvi. 2 ("miserable comforters are ye all") the active form, *παρακλήτωρ*, is used, not the passive, *παράκλητος*. In the Greek of the New Testament it occurs only in this Gospel and in 1 John ii. 1, where it is rendered "Advocate." The phrase, "*another* Paraclete," in chap. xiv. 16, implies that Christ thought of Himself, as St. John in the Epistle speaks of Him, as a Paraclete; and no one can doubt that in these five passages the word has one and the same meaning. It can hardly be doubted, further, that the necessary meaning in the Epistle is "Advocate," and it will follow that the meaning of the word in the Greek of St. John is the same as that in the Greek of the classical authors.

(3) That the meaning of "Advocate" was attached to the word in the Greek of the first and second Christian centuries may be seen from the following passages:—

"For it was indispensable that the man who was consecrated to the Father of the world should have as a paraclete His Son, the being most perfect in all virtue, to procure forgiveness of sins and a supply of unlimited blessings" (Philo, *Vit. Mos.* iii. 14; Bohn's Trans., vol. iii., p. 102.) The student of Philo will find the word used in the same sense in *de Josepho*, § 40, and *in Flaccum*, §§ 3 and 5. These references are of special value from the fact that Philo was, like St. John, a Jew by birth and culture, who became later in life a student of the Greek language and literature. (Comp. *Excursus A*, p. 552.)

"Who will be our advocate if our deeds are found not to be holy and upright?" (Clem. Rom., cap. 6.)

"Advocates of the rich, unjust judges of the poor, sinners in all things." (Ep. of Barnabas, cap. xx., speaking of those who walk in "the path of darkness;" Hoole's Trans., p. 101.)

(4) It is true that many Greek Fathers take *παράκλητος*, both in the Gospel and the Epistle, in the active sense. "He is called Paraclete," says Cyril of Jerusalem, "because He comforts, and consoles, and helps our weakness." (*Catech.* xvi. 20.) How this error arose—for that an error it is all analogy of words of like form goes to show—it is not difficult to see. The word *παράκλητος* occurs only five times in the New, and nowhere in the Old Testament. The cognate active forms, meaning comfort, exhort, console, occur frequently in the LXX. and considerably more than 100 times in the New Testament. Read, *e.g.*, 2 Cor. i. 1—7. The ordinary sense, then, overrode the technical meaning of one form of the word, and the idea of advocacy was lost in that of comfort.

(5) The Vulgate reads in the Gospel *Paracletus*, or *Paraclitus*, and *Advocatus* in the Epistle; but the old Latin originally had *Advocatus* throughout. (Comp. Tertullian, *adv. Prax.* cap. ix.; *De Monog.* cap. iii.)

(6) These facts taken together have convinced most scholars who have investigated the question, that "Comforter" cannot be regarded as a tenable rendering of the Greek word *παράκλητος*, and the conviction is one which seems to be extending among English scholars. But here, as in other cases which we have met in the study of St. John, the attention of scholars has been directed too exclusively to the meaning of the Greek word. It is important to bear in mind that the author is, like Philo, a Jew writing Greek, and in this fact we shall, it is believed, find the true key to the sense in which he used the word. The Hebrews had, in their contact with other nations, borrowed many words from them, and it necessarily followed from the conquests of Greece and Rome that the Greek and Latin military and legal terms were well known to them. Now *παράκλητος* was, as we have seen above, a technical legal term, and it was literally taken over into the later Hebrew and written *P$^e$raklit*, or, in the definite form, *P$^e$raklita*. It means, when thus taken over, "Advocate," and a careful examination of the Talmudic passages, quoted in Buxtorf and Levy, leaves the impression that it has no other meaning. The opposite Greek word, *κατήγορος* (*Katēgoros*, accuser), was adopted in the same way. Like *παράκλητος*, it was clipped of its termination, and was written *Kattēgor*, or *Kattegora*. That this word *κατήγορος* was used in Palestine in the first century we know from Acts xxiii. 30, 35; xxiv. 8, 16, 18; and from the interpolated passage, John viii. 10. In all these cases the full Greek word is used. But St. John himself has occasion to speak of an "accuser of the brethren" (Rev. xii. 10), and what word does he use? He actually writes in Greek the clipped Hebrew form *Kattēgor*, a word which is wholly unknown to the Greek language, and which was so strange to copyists that they altered it, and wrote the fuller form. The Gospel and the Epistle tell us then of a Paraclete ever present with the believer, and of a Paraclete who is with the Father; the Apocalypse tells of the "*Kattēgor* of the brethren." With this contrast in his mind, let the reader turn to such a passage as the following, taken from the Mishna, "Rabbi Elias ben Jacob saith, 'He that keepeth one commandment obtains for himself one *P$^e$raklit*, but he who committeth one sin obtains for himself one *Kattēgor*'" (*Pirke Aboth*, iv. 11); or the following, "If a man have distinguished *P$^e$raklits* he is snatched from death" (*Schab.* fol. 32, 1); and it will be hardly necessary to produce further proof that Advocate is the true meaning of the word Paraclete. Two other important facts bearing upon the meaning of this word in the later Hebrew and Syriac languages, may, however, be noted:—

(*a*) The word *P$^e$raklita* is twice used in the Targum on Job, viz., in xvi. 20, where the Targum reads, "My *P$^e$raklits* are my friends" (Hebr., "My mockers are my friends;" or, "My friends scorn me," Auth. vers.), and in xxxiii. 23, where it reads, "An angel as Paraclete," where the Hebrew is probably, "An angel as mediator;" Auth. vers., "A messenger with him, an interpreter." It is significant that *P$^e$raklita* is not used in the Targum of Job xvi. 2 (see above, § 2), though it almost certainly would have been had it meant "Comforter," for it was at hand, and occurs in the very same chapter.

(*b*) The word *P$^e$raklita* is used in each of the passages in this Gospel, and also in the passage in the Epistle in the Peshito-Syriac translation. This fact means that the word was in the second century incorporated in the cognate Syriac language, and that if it be taken to mean Advocate in the Epistle it must be so taken in the Gospel also. The same version also renders *Katēgor* in Rev. xii. 10 by a derivative of the Greek word.

(7) It is believed that enough has now been said to justify the rendering in the Notes, and to show that "Comforter" cannot be retained as a translation of *παράκλητος*, at any rate in the modern sense of the word. It may be questioned, however, whether our translators did not include the sense of "Advocate" in the word "Comforter" (Low Lat., *Confortare;* Old Fr., *Conforter*), which originally meant "strengthener," "supporter." The older meaning of the word will be at once seen in the following passages from Wiclif's version:—

"And he *coumfortide* hym with nailes that it shulde not be moued" (Isa. xli. 7;—A.V., "fastened").

"And an aungel apperide to him fro hevene and *coumfortide* him" (Luke xxii. 43;—A.V., "strengthening him").

"And whanne he hadde take mete he was *coumfortid*" (Acts ix. 19;—A.V., "he was strengthened").

"Do ghe manli and be ghe *coumfortid* in the Lord" (1 Cor. xvi. 13;—A.V., "Quit you like men, be strong").

"I mai alle thingis in him that *coumfortith* me" (Phil. iv. 13;—A.V., "that strengtheneth me").

This sense is not uncommon in Elizabethan English. Thus Hooker, *e.g.*, says, "The evidence of God's own testimony, added unto the natural assent of reason, concerning the certainty of them, doth not a little *comfort* and confirm the same" (*Eccles. Pol.*, Book i.); and again,—

"The very prayer of Christ obtained angels to be sent Him as *comforters* in His agony" (*Ibid.*, Bk. v. § 48).

The truth that the Holy Ghost is the Comforter is independent of this translation, and is, indeed, more fully established by the rendering Advocate. The comfort which comes from His presence is not simply that of consolation in sorrow, but that of counsel, guidance, pleading with God, conviction of the world. He is to abide in the disciples for ever, and teach them all things (chap. xiv. 16, 17, 26); to witness with them of Christ (chap. xv. 26); to convict the world of sin, righteousness, judgment; to guide the disciples into all truth (chap. xvi. 7—13); to make intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered (Rom. viii. 26), as Christ Himself had done (chap. xvii.), and as the great High Priest ever liveth to do (Heb. vii. 25). He is "another Advocate," to be to believers in all time what Christ was to the first disciples, to be in men an Advocate on earth as Christ is for men an Advocate with the Father (1 John ii. 1).

[Comp. Lightfoot *On a Fresh Revision of the New Testament*, pp. 50—55; Trench *On the Authorised Version*, p. 23; and especially Hare, *Mission of the Comforter*, Note K, p. 309, Ed. 3; and Pearson *On the Creed*, p. 329, Note. The student will find references to the Rabbinical writings and Targums in Schöttgen, vol. i., p. 1119, and Buxtorf's and Levy's lexicons under the words $P^{e}$*raklît*(*a*), *Kattēgor*(*a*), and *Sannîgor*.]

*"GOD, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of Thy faithful people, by the sending to them the light of Thy Holy Spirit; Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in His holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen."*—COLLECT FOR WHIT-SUNDAY.

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